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WELCOMING THE STRANGER

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IRISH MIGRANT WELFARE IN BRITAIN SINCE 1957

Patricia Kennedy



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Foreword

It is a pleasure for me to introduce Patricia Kennedy's work entitled *Welcoming the Stranger: Irish Migrant Welfare in Britain since 1957*, which examines the rich history of the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy to Britain. This is particularly the case as the author is a member of the Kerry Women Writers group, a group which I had the pleasure of launching in March 2014.

The legacy of Irish emigration to Britain is immense. Britain has been the largest area of Irish emigrant settlement since the 1940s and the Irish Diaspora in Britain today is unique, not only in terms of its size but also its diversity. Our community in Britain encompasses every demographic and is represented in every walk of life. The Irish community, both Irish-born and of Irish descent, has made distinctive, creative contributions to virtually every aspect of British society, including business, infrastructure, politics, public service, the arts, media, community, entertainment and sport. There is virtually no aspect of British civic or political life that has not been enriched by contributions from the Irish community.

Just one example of the contribution of Irish emigrants to Britain is that of the experience of the construction industry, which was the largest single employer of Irish male migrant labour during the waves of emigration in the 1950s and 1980s. That tradition of Irish construction work goes back at least as far as the building of the canals and railways, the reconstruction of Britain after the war, through to the construction, in more recent times, of the Channel Tunnel and the skyscrapers of the City. Monuments to the labour of Irish workers and construction companies dot the landscape in Britain today.

In the same era, the contribution of the Irish community to other sectors, including agriculture, teaching and nursing is also widely recognised. This was acknowledged by President Higgins during his recent historic State Visit, where he witnessed the continuing contribution of Irish nurses and doctors to British medicine during his visit to University College Hospital in London. The everyday stories of Irish people and their families making their homes and lives in Britain paved the way for the recent high points in relationships between these islands, including the 2014 State Visit.

However behind the many positive experiences of Irish emigrants who made their home in Britain was a more hidden story of marginalisation, regret and loneliness. For many Irish the experience of migration in Britain was an isolating one. Organisations such as the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy provided an invaluable service in supporting the most vulnerable of Irish emigrants. Indeed the Chaplaincy was itself a pioneer in developing the model of welfare organisations catering to Irish emigrants in Britain. It also led the way in offering support and guidance to some of the historically most marginalised and disadvantaged of the Irish abroad, Irish Travellers and those who find themselves imprisoned in Britain and their families.

Since its foundation in 1957 Irish emigrants over the decades found a comforting and familiar voice in the Chaplaincy which sought to bridge the void between the expectation and the reality of emigration.

Many Irish emigrants in Britain continue to face very challenging circumstances. Lack of family networks and increasing isolation continue to be problems for some of the elderly Irish. Those in the 1950s wave of migration have now reached retirement age and within this group there are significant numbers of elderly Irish in vulnerable situations. Issues of concern include access to housing and welfare benefits, problems of substance misuse and the evolving needs of an ageing community.

The Government of Ireland is acutely aware of its duty to support both Irish emigrants and their descendents who left Ireland in recent generations. Since the establishment of the Irish Abroad Unit in the Department of Foreign Affairs in 2004, Irish organisations in Britain, including the Irish Chaplaincy, have received grant funding of over £60 million.

The further enhancement of our connection to our community in Britain remains central to Government policy. As the first Minister for Diaspora Affairs, the establishment of my position is a tangible demonstration of the Irish Government's deep commitment to the Irish community abroad. Ireland's greatest resource has always been our people and the valuable contribution that our community abroad has made to Ireland throughout our history is widely acknowledged and respected by the Government and the people of Ireland.

I would like to congratulate Patricia once again on this wonderful history of the Irish Chaplaincy which is an extremely important contribution to the rich narrative of Irish emigration to Britain. In particular it is a valuable record of the lives of the more invisible members of our community in Britain and the often unsung heroes who sought to support and sustain them. The Chaplaincy has been a patient, committed and empathetic voice for the voiceless Irish and its support has made a huge impact in many lives – go raibh mile maithagaibh go léir.

Mr Jimmy Deenihan T.D.
Minister for Diaspora Affairs of Ireland
January 2015

Acknowledgements

Writing this book was an incredible journey, which began in 2007 when I was commissioned by the Irish Episcopal Commission for Emigrants (IECE) to research the history of the first fifty years of the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy Scheme to Britain. The project was the brainchild of Fr Alan Hilliard, then Secretary to the IECE, who recognised the importance of recording the pioneering work of the men and women who worked with and on behalf of Irish emigrants to Britain. I am very grateful to Alan for his generosity and thoughtfulness, for always being available to answer my many questions and for his particular expertise on Church teaching on migration.

In the intervening years I have been privileged to meet a large number of very interesting people who have taught me so much about social justice, many of whom I now call friends. I would like to thank the Chaplaincy personnel past and present, in both Maynooth and London, who gave me their time, answered my many questions and made their archives available to me, as did the many service users and policy makers who shared their insights with me. I would like to thank, in particular, Fr Bobby Gilmore (SSC), Fr Paul Byrne (OMI) and Bishop Eamonn Casey who were attached to the Chaplaincy for decades and were extremely generous with their stories, insights, personal archives and, most importantly, their wisdom. There were many times when we laughed and cried together. A special thank you must go to Srs Attracta Heneghan, Veronica Gannon and Gretta Cummins with whom I spent a memorable day in Galway. I would like to thank Fr Tom McCabe (OMI), Ms Niamh Collins, Columban Missionary Society Archivist, and Ms Noelle Dowling, Dublin Diocesan Archivist for their generosity.

I would like to thank my colleagues at the School of Applied Social Science in University College Dublin (UCD) for their support and encouragement. I am particularly grateful to my friend, Dr Nessa Winston, for reading an early draft and sharing with me her expertise on Irish emigration to Britain and my friend, Dr Marie Keenan, who was always there to explain the intricacies of the Catholic Church. I would also like to thank Professor Bryan Fanning for his comments on an early draft.

I would like to thank Karen McHugh who has inspired me with her undying commitment to migrants since we first shared an office in the Brent Irish Advisory Service in London in 1990. A special thanks to Orlagh, Finola, Liz, Anne, Olivia, Mary, Billy and Síle. Thank you to Conor, Dylan, Fionn and Millie, my wonderful children, who travelled with me to Irish centres in Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham and London as we put together the pieces of this important story. Thank you to Bernard for his enduring love and care.

Finally, thank you to Lisa Hyde and all the team at Irish Academic Press for publishing this book.

Patricia Kennedy
January 2014

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Introduction

This book is the result of a research project commissioned by the Irish Episcopal Commission for Emigrants (IECE) in 2007 (now known as the Irish Council for Emigrants) to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy Scheme. It is based on archival research and over eighty interviews with key informants. Fortunately, the records kept by those working for the IECE are meticulous and my exploration of their extensive archives and other sources will, I hope, help to piece together the tremendous work its personnel have undertaken on behalf of Irish emigrants for over half a century in the vacuum left by the Irish and British governments. One of the priests I interviewed in the course of this research, Fr Bobby Gilmore, told me that, had he thought about the political climate when he joined the Chaplaincy in London in the 1970s, he would not have agreed to take up his position there.[1] Those words resonated with me as I delved deeper and I came to realize the complexity of the issue I was exploring.

The story of the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy to Britain is one of international relations and political intrigue, economic booms and busts, miscarriages of justice, papal encyclicals and Gospel teaching and, at its very heart, the struggle for equality and justice, often and most usually battling against the odds and the establishment. It is the story of Anglo-Irish relations unfolding over very turbulent and difficult decades. The roll-call includes the names of the rich and famous, as well as the poor and marginalized; the most prominent world and church leaders of the second half of the twentieth century, including Margaret Thatcher, John Hume, Cardinals Griffin, Heenan, Hume and Ó Fiaich, Presidents Mary Robinson and Mary McAleese have all played a part in the Chaplaincy's story. It also includes the thousands of ordinary Irish men and women who were the backbone

of the emerging British welfare state, those who built its infrastructure and serviced its institutions, men killed on building sites, young single mothers in exile, disenfranchised prisoners, those suffering from HIV and AIDs, homeless men dying alone and Ireland's own ethnic community, Travellers. The story unfolds before a backdrop of papal encyclicals and international agreements. Some of the personnel of the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy became famous in their own right as a result of their tremendous work with Irish emigrants. Bishop Eamonn Casey was the subject of a BBC documentary and Oblate Fr Paul Byrne received an OBE and a prestigious award from the Labour Party in Ireland.

In his seminal work, *The Men who Built Britain, the Story of the Irish Navvy*, Ultan Cowley quoted Paul Ricour: 'to be forgotten, and written out of history, is to die again'.[2] He expressed his hope that this would 'never apply to this special breed of men'.[3]

I would like to extend the same sentiment to the personnel of the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy: the priests, religious, sisters and lay members along with the bishops and cardinals of the two Hierarchies who supported them. Senator David Norris, in a Senate debate on Emigration in 1997, referred to the fact that the 'wonderful work' of the Catholic Church with emigrants 'which is unpopular, unpaid and unseen, is sometimes forgotten'.[4] The story of the importance of their endeavours remains largely untold, except in O'Shea's notable history of the first twenty-five years of the Emigrant Chaplaincy Scheme[5] and Cotter's autobiographical account of the hotel chaplaincy.[6] It is to be hoped that their ongoing work will be remembered in the history of Britain and Ireland and in the developing story of social policy throughout the world, in spite of, and perhaps because of, the humility with which it has been accomplished.

In today's world, we are challenged by migration on a scale never before witnessed. In 2013, the number of international migrants worldwide reached 232 million, up from 175 million in 2000 and 154 million in 1990.[7] We can learn from the enduring work of the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy, characterized by its excellence in service delivery, campaigning, lobbying and influencing of policy, how to respond appropriately to our own immigrants and how to 'welcome

the stranger'. Fr Bobby Gilmore explained: 'You have to be an optimist to migrate.'[8] He stated poetically:

> It is the human heart on a journey of hope. You have to match the hope in their eyes. It is a difficult job. They have huge hope to leave home, to make more. They carry the hopes of others. They have to go through loss, the break of primary relationships, excitement, isolation and feeling that they are unique. How do they cope?[9]

The Chaplains too carried their own loss, pain and grief as fellow migrants. In the course of this research, I was often told by those I interviewed of how ill-prepared they felt for such challenging work. This is what makes the story of the Irish Chaplaincy so poignant. It shows the courage of men and women, sometimes young, sometimes well into their autumn years, overcoming their own sense of displacement, battling for justice for Irish people abroad and meeting constantly changing challenges. Many of those interviewed for this study explained their vision of chaplaincy work. Bishop Seamus Hegarty explained it as 'walking with the migrant'.[10] This sense of being present with the migrant, endorsed by Archbishop Michael Neary, permeates the story of the Irish Chaplaincy.[11] Fr Gerry Kivlehan referred to the emigrant chaplain as a prophet, speaking out for those who are often unable to speak for themselves.[12] Bishop Eamonn Casey endorsed this, suggesting that being a prophet additionally involves empowering the emigrant to speak for himself.[13] Seasoned campaigner for those in prison, Fr Gerry McFlynn, and Sr Agnes, a life-long friend to those serving life sentences, stated simply: 'When I was in prison you visited me' (*Mt* 25:36).[14] Sr Attracta Heneghan summed up her experience with the Irish speaking community in Huddersfield as one of 'belonging',[15] while Sr Veronica Gannon, lovingly referred to as the 'Mother of the Chaplaincy', talked of the challenge of moving to London at sixty years of age, after spending forty years in Westport and of how: 'I only had myself to offer.'[16]

A brief journey through the last six decades illustrates some of the obstacles Irish emigrants and their chaplains had to face and overcome. In the early decades they were often met with discrimination, both

direct and indirect. There was the overt discrimination: signs reading 'No Blacks, No Dogs, No Irish' (until outlawed by the Race Relations Act, 1976). After a brief hiatus, they were hampered by a different stereotype as a result of the various bombing campaigns and the perception of the Irish as terrorists. These were the decades marked by the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) and 'The Troubles.' In the course of this research, I travelled to Irish centres in Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham and London to try to assess the impact of the Irish Chaplaincy. I was told stories by Irish people, forced to emigrate in the 1950s, of the hardship they endured both pre- and post-departure, and how they felt they belonged 'nowhere'. I was surprised by the constant refrain of elderly men and women in Birmingham that they felt abandoned by their own country. Many explained how they interpret the reluctance of the Irish government to grant them free travel when they return home on holidays as continued evidence of this abandonment.[17] People who had been ostracized and labelled by their work colleagues and neighbours following the IRA bombing campaigns in Britain explained how things have now changed. Seasoned campaigners, like Tommy Walshe in Liverpool, told me: 'It's cool to be Irish now'.[18] Thus we have here a journey from the outlawed, the marginalized 'Paddies', perceived as murderers, to the 'cool' diaspora. Fr Gerry French accredits this change to the success of second generation Irish people such as Mick McCarthy, Boy George and the Gallagher Brothers, the Riverdance phenomenon and the way in which Presidents Mary Robinson and Mary McAleese have reached out internationally.[19] On the other hand, Sr Joan Kane, who was actively involved in the Birmingham Six campaign and worked with the Irish community in Britain from 1982 to 2000, accredits change to the changed political situation.[20] Sorohan explores these and related issues in depth in *Irish London during the Troubles*.[21]

The story of the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy to Britain is one of determination, struggle and heartache, but it is also peppered with victory. Tonge states: 'whilst the Catholic Church would claim that its primary roles are spiritual and pastoral, it has sometimes been seen as performing a political role.'[22] The Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy, walking with the migrant and providing direct services when and where needed,

with respect and dignity, was simultaneously working at another level. It undoubtedly influenced social policy in Ireland and Britain. It stands out for its efforts to increase the visibility of emigrants through research and lobbying for their inclusion in official statistics in both countries, and for its consistent pressure on the Irish government to take responsibility for Irish emigrants and to provide core funding for emigrant services. It made a major contribution in several substantive areas including housing, welfare services and work with prisoners and their families. In analyzing the significant contribution of the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy, it is important to acknowledge the work it did, as well as the very significant *way* in which it went about its work: through strategic planning, networking and continuous research and evaluation, all of which have been features of its work from its beginning to the present time. Since its inception in 1957, the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy has actively engaged in all aspects of the policy-making process: planning, formulation, implementation and evaluation. Tim Pat Coogan, in *Wherever Green is Worn,* writes:

> In parts of the country where the Irish experienced particular difficulties, someone like Father Joe Taffe in Birmingham provided a rare beacon of comfort. In London, Father Gerry French of the Irish Chaplaincy, Sister Sarah and Sister Joan Kane, along with Father Gerry McFlynn, of the Irish Commission for Prisoners Overseas, constantly cropped up in conversation. So too did the names of Father Bobby Gilmore of Kilburn, Father Paddy Smith of Acton and Father Denis Cormican of Camden.[23]

This book is offered as a small contribution to the recording of the Chaplaincy's important and unique history. It pays tribute to the personnel who worked tirelessly, many for decades, to fulfil the challenge of the Gospel, those who walked with and spoke with and for the many hundreds of thousands of Irish emigrants who often, involuntarily, sought new and better lives in Britain. In post-Celtic Tiger Ireland, as another wave of emigration from the country is in full swing, we can learn about and appreciate the pioneering work of the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy to Britain and reflect on future challenges.

It is summer 2014 as I write. A mother and daughter are on the radio talking about emigration. The mother is describing her joy waiting for her emigrant daughter to return from Australia for the summer holidays, tracking the flight as it makes its way across the world. The radio blares out requests for absent sons, daughters, grandchildren spread across the globe. The television brings into Irish homes tear-stained faces of families reuniting at airports, home for the holidays. 2013 was the year of 'The Gathering', an Irish government initiative designed to boost Irish tourism, a determined effort to entice migrants home to visit the homeland. In October 2013, Finance Minister, Michael Noonan, announced that the Air Travel Tax of €3 per passenger departing from an airport would be abolished in 2014. I am aware of the contrast between these events and the situation in 2006 when I began to trawl the archives of the Irish Emigrant Council to research the history of the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy to Britain. It appeared then that emigration from Ireland was a thing of the past. The focus then was on immigration and the many challenges Ireland had to face as it became a multi-cultural society with an estimated 167 languages. The first decade of the twenty-first century heralded another wave of departures, not yet visible in 2006.

Established in 1957, the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy to Britain emerged from a different social, economic, political and cultural context. It was a period of economic recession, high emigration, high unemployment, border conflict and tensions. Nevertheless, as Feeney notes in his biography of Dr McQuaid, '…it was a period of unparalleled success, prosperity, and popularity for the Catholic Church. In the 1950s the Irish Church reached its acme.'[24] He elaborates: 'In this decade the Church reached its peak in terms of prestige and sheer power; from 1957-61 one secondary school leaver in eight entered a seminary. Vocations reached an all-time high. In 1958 for the first time ever in Ireland, more than 400 were ordained.'[25]

Feeney catalogues the extensive church building programme directed by Dr McQuaid in the 1950s, referring to churches that were completed at enormous cost at a time when emigration reached a peak of over 70,000 per year. He states: 'the list of churches built by Dr McQuaid in the 1950s and the cost of them at a time of low wages and

high emigration is at once impressive and slightly frightening.'[26] At the time, there was a national strategy to build new houses and these new estates were judged to require places of worship for Catholics. The 1948 coalition government produced *Ireland is Building,* a brochure outlining a ten year plan for house building which would see the construction of 110,000 houses.[27] Feeney notes: 'Dr McQuaid, the administrator, planned the building of new churches almost as soon as the Corporation began planning a new housing development.'[28]

As I write, another issue haunts me. In 2013, I was commissioned by Towards Healing to undertake an independent evaluation of its Facilitated Listening Meetings. Towards Healing is a counselling and support service for survivors of institutional, clerical and religious abuse. Funded by the Catholic Church, it was established in 2011 following consultation between the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference, Conference of Religious of Ireland (CORI), the Irish Missionary Union (IMU), Faoiseamh Counselling Service and Survivor Groups. During the long hot summer of 2013, as I listened to the experiences of survivors and Church representatives, I wondered about the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy to Britain and if I had overlooked any important material in the archives. Had I been naive? As the issue of child sexual abuse and the Catholic Church received more media attention in the decades from 1990 onwards, Ireland, the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia and Germany came under particular scrutiny. In *Child Sexual Abuse and the Catholic Church: Gender, Power, and Organizational Culture,* Keenan[29] gives an excellent overview and analysis of child sexual abuse and the Catholic Church in Ireland and beyond. In 1999, the *Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse* (CICA) was established by the Irish Government to investigate the extent and effects of abuse on children from 1936 onwards. Known as the Ryan Commission (previously the Laffoy Commission—Judge Laffoy resigned on 2 September 2003), after its chair, Justice Seán Ryan, it published its report in 2009.[30] The Residential Institutions Redress Act 2002 established a redress scheme. The 2005 *Ferns Report*[31] was an Irish government inquiry into the allegations of clerical sexual abuse in the Diocese of Ferns in County Wexford.

In October 2002, the RTE television programme, 'Prime Time', broadcast a special report entitled 'Cardinal Secrets' containing

accounts of children abused by Catholic priests serving in the Archdiocese of Dublin, where complaints had been made at higher levels and effectively ignored, both by the church and by the Garda Síochána. This led to the Commission of Investigation Act 2004 mandating the establishment of a Commission of Investigation in Dublin Archdiocese to examine the manner in which allegations of sexual abuse of children by priests between 1975 and 2004 were dealt with by Church and State authorities. The Murphy Report was published in 2009.[32] An investigation into the procedural fairness of the 2004 Act and the Murphy report states that it:

> …accepts and acknowledges that grave injustice and suffering were inflicted on young people and their families by the sexual abuse of children perpetrated by clerics in positions of trust, operating under the aegis of the Archdiocese of Dublin...also acknowledges that the failure by the diocese to respond in a timely or effective manner to allegations of such abuse aggravated the wrongdoing and extended the injustice and the suffering of innocent children…[33]

John Charles McQuaid was Archbishop of Dublin from 1940 to 1972 and instigated the establishment of the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy. The service necessarily involved movement of priests and religious between Ireland and Britain. In my careful exploration of archival material and in my interviews I did not find any evidence of personnel being moved between the islands in relation to any inappropriate behaviour.

This book begins by exploring the social and economic factors which led to high levels of migration from Ireland to Britain in the post-war period. It looks at the push factors: high unemployment, bleak prospects for marriage and a secure quality of life. It looks at the pull factors: an emerging welfare state, free education, healthcare, the promise of adequate housing and full employment. The attraction of a more exciting and sophisticated way of life was influential, as was the perception of greater freedom and the possibility of falling in love and forming a family.

It was out of this context that the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy emerged. Its role would not have developed, however, had it not been for the strong foundations of the Catholic Church in charity and social justice and its particular and explicit interest in the plight of migrants. The book considers Catholic social teaching on migration and on ecclesiastical and pastoral work with emigrants. It examines Papal and other documents that influenced the work of the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy. Starting in the early twentieth century, work with migrants gathered momentum culminating in 2004 with the publication of *Ergas Migrantes*.[34] In the 1950s, in the wake of the Second World War and major displacement of people, emphasis on the role of the Catholic Church with migrants provided a framework from which the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy emerged.

Having established the theological basis for migrant outreach work, the book examines the emergence of the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy. It focuses on the missions to Britain which preceded the establishment of the Chaplaincy. At the beginning, there were close links with the Legion of Mary whose members regularly met migrants from the boat trains at Euston and Paddington. The narrative describes the establishment and functioning of the camps for those who built the motorways and power stations. It introduces the hotel chaplains who reached out to the young Irish in the hotel and catering trades in London. It discusses the work of priests attached to particular parishes including Westminster and Luton.

As the book proceeds, the impressive and developing role of the Irish Chaplaincy in establishing advice and welfare services throughout Britain, as its influence increased, is documented. Its successes included such important initiatives as the London Irish Centre, the Hammersmith Welfare Bureau and the Irish Welfare and Information Centre in Birmingham. The important work that the Chaplaincy did in Huddersfield with Irish-speaking emigrants from the west of Ireland is introduced and the challenges for Irish emigrants in Britain during the Troubles are examined. The book draws a picture of the political climate at the time and highlights the important role of the bishops of the two Hierarchies in working together on the Two-Island Liaison Committee. It focuses on the third wave of emigration in the 1980s, the

extent, the challenges and the responses. The Thatcher era ushered in cuts in welfare provision and this chapter documents the influential role of the Irish Chaplaincy in establishing advice and welfare services including the Haringey Irish Cultural Community Centre, Action Group for Irish Youth (AGIY) and Immigrant Counselling and Psychotherapy (ICAP).

Following on from this analysis, the book recognizes the specific and unique role played by the Emigrant Chaplaincy on a substantive area of service provision during the 1960s. This branch of the Chaplaincy's work is hard to overstate. Coming of age during a period when there was a massive housing crisis in Britain, members of the Chaplaincy played a strategic role in pioneering major new initiatives in this sphere, including being instrumental in the development of significant organizations such as the Catholic Housing Aid Society (CHAS), Shelter and Shelter Housing Aid Society (SHAC).

As the book proceeds, it further elaborates the IECE's response to turbulent times by exploring another important area in which the Chaplaincy provided leadership and was often in the public gaze. The development of the Irish Commission for Prisoners Overseas (ICPO) in 1985 was a pioneering initiative which emerged against the backdrop of tempestuous political times in Ireland and Britain, marked by high profile miscarriage of justice campaigns and the stark consequences for many of the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

The book goes on to document the long struggle, led and fuelled by the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy, in campaigning for the Irish government to take responsibility for the Irish Abroad and to secure funding for sustainable services. This campaign lasted for over half a century and was finally successful, a success marked by the publication of the report, the *Task Force on Emigration*, the establishment of the Irish Abroad Unit (in the Department of Foreign Affairs) and the guarantee of future funding.

In conclusion, the book examines the work of the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy since 2007, as it moves forward beyond its fiftieth year which coincided with the economic downturn and a new wave of emigration. The focus is primarily on prisoners, Travellers and 'the forgotten Irish'. The analysis describes the very important lead the

Traveller Equality Project has taken in introducing many new initiatives in prisons in England and Wales before summing up the work of this remarkable organization.

NOTES

1 Interview with Fr Bobby Gilmore, 2007
2 U. Cowley, *The Men Who Built Britain: A History of the Irish Navvy* (Dublin: The Wolfhound Press, 2001), p. 13.
3 Ibid.
4 *Seanad Debates - Official Report* 17-12-97 (8 October 1998).
5 K. O'Shea, *The Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy Scheme in Britain 1957-1982* (Naas: The Lenister Leader, 1985).
6 E. Cotter *Awakening* (Dublin: Tandy Publications, 2000).
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8 Interview with Fr Bobby Gilmore, 2007.
9 Ibid.
10 Interview with Bishop Seamus Hegarty, 2007.
11 Interview with Archbishop Michael Neary, 2007.
12 Interview with Fr Gerry Kivlehan, 2007.
13 Interview with Bishop Casey, 2007.
14 Separate interviews with Fr Gerry McFlynn & Sr Agnes, 2007.
15 Interview with Sr Attracta Heneghan, 2014.
16 Interview with Sr Veronica Gannon, 2014.
17 Interviews with elderly Irish migrants in Birmingham, 2007.
18 Interview with Tommy Walshe, 2007.
19 Interview with Fr Gerry French, 2007.
20 Interview with Sr Joan Kane, 2007.
21 S. Sorohan, *Irish London during the Troubles* (Dublin and Portland Oregon: Irish Academic Press, 2012).
22 J. Tonge, *Northern Ireland Conflict and Change* (Essex: Pearson Education Ltd., 2002), p.105.
23 T. P. Coogan, *Wherever Green is Worn* (London: Hutchinson, 2000), p. 160.
24 J. Feeney, *Man and the Mask: John Charles McQuaid* (Cork: The Mercier Press, 1974), p.28.

25 Ibid., p.24.
26 Ibid., p. 29.
27 D. Ferriter, *The Transformation of Ireland 1900-2000* (London: Profile Books, 2004), p.446.
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29 M. Keenan, *Child Sexual Abuse and the Catholic Church: Gender, Power, and Organizational Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).
30 S. Ryan, *The Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (CICA)* (Dublin: Stationery Office, 2009).
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1

Emigration from Ireland to Britain—The Start of the Journey

> There is something unnerving when you watch a grown man cry. He was in his mid-50s, dressed in overalls and work boots, and spoke to me through the kitchen window as he took a short break from his job. He tried his manly best to hide the tears and the choke in his voice in the mug of tea he was drinking from.[1]

Emigration has always been a feature of Irish society, so too has the paradoxical experience of both optimism and pain felt by generations of Irish migrants. The security of employment is set against the heart-wrenching sadness of the migrant whose portrait, recalled by Alan Hilliard, appears above. Since 1800, approximately ten million people have emigrated from the island.[2] In 1841, the population of the area equivalent to the Republic of Ireland was 6.5 million.[3] This had halved by 1901, due to death and emigration.[4] It stabilized at around 2.9 million between 1926 and 1951 and fell to an all-time low of 2.8 million in 1961.[5] The *2011 Census of Population* indicates the population of Ireland at the time to be 4,581,269.[6] This is the highest it has been since 1861, an increase of 341,421 persons since 2006 or 8.1 per cent.[7]

The Historical Context

Over the centuries, stories of emigrants departing tearfully from train stations and ferry ports are widespread. Recalling his emigration from Swinford in County Mayo to Britain in the mid-1920s, John Neary wrote:

> There was no more poignant place than the local railway station. Year after year one's nearest and dearest lined the platform waiting for the train to take them to the 'promised land'. One saw mothers battling, usually unsuccessfully, to hold back the tears as they said goodbye to a son or daughter—knowing full well that there was never more than an even chance of ever seeing them again. Looking back one has the impression that we were groomed for emigration. The fateful day hung over all of us. Mine came on a fine June morning 55 years ago. My mother accompanied me to the station and I joined many men and boys bound for the farms of Yorkshire. We were spailpeens—Ireland's name for its migratory workers ... in one way we were the lucky ones for there were also the spailpeens who had to walk to Dublin because they couldn't afford the rail fare. These were really hard men. They would depart in the dead of night because they didn't want the local folk to know of their plight. In the migratory vernacular, they were the 'long-distance kiddies'…. Few had suitcases in those days. What possessions we had were in a bundle, wrapped in black cloth and carried under one's arm. The older men referred to it as 'tie the knot'. It was a useful bundle. One sat on it and, as I was to learn, it also made a good pillow.[8]

Neary described arriving in Selby on market day and waiting to be hired by local farmers, first of all having to undergo the humiliating experience of being visually assessed in relation to height, weight and strength as a measurement of his ability to work.[9] It was long and backbreaking work: usually 'from dark to dark, from early dawn to late dusk, about 16 hours' cleaning a field of sugar beet for a payment of £2 an acre shared amongst the work crew.[10] He explained his arrival

at the farm and being shown sleeping quarters—a large room in a corn shed.[11] There was no furniture and for beds they were given a bundle of straw and a small blanket. Cooking and washing facilities were limited to the hot water brought every morning by the farmer. In another article in the *Irish Post*, Neary recalled how they lived mainly on corned beef, walking the roads 'from job to job and sleeping in haystacks'.[12] As a result they 'were no longer tidy or clean. Soon we would be lousy and for many there was no escape from that state.'[13] He explained:

> This is why a lot of men never returned home again. They were ashamed. You can't go home when you're down. Your pride doesn't let you. Once down and lousy, it was difficult to come up. Some men were spending what little they earned on drink. This compounded the problem.[14]

John Neary's accounts, describing emigration in the mid-1920s resonate throughout the decades of emigration from Ireland to Britain. The 1930s, 1950s and 1980s brought different challenges and hardships, but a common thread of poverty, marginalization and a fear of returning home and being perceived as a failure permeates many stories. Recent accounts of the 'forgotten Irish' and prisoners abroad remind us that this is still a current issue.

Ultan Cowley, in his book, *The Men who Built Britain, the Story of the Irish Navvy,* in which he shows huge admiration for the Irish migrant labourers of the twentieth century, outlines the difficulties faced by Irish emigrants in Britain. Many industries operated a closed-shop policy that excluded Irish people and wages were 'meagre and promotion slow and anti-Irish sentiment was rife.'[15] He acknowledges some of the difficulties experienced as a result of the 1920s' War of Independence, the 1930s' IRA bombing campaign and Irish neutrality during the Second World War.[16] However, there was also extensive recruitment of the Irish during the War, which he describes as 'Irish penetration of British industry on an unprecedented scale.'[17] He suggests that the necessity for Irish labour for reconstruction 'also had an ameliorating effect on anti-Irish sentiment'.[18] This was tempered, however, 'by hostile

reaction to the sheer extent of Irish immigration in the two decades following the end of the war.'[19] By the 1960s, anti-Irish sentiment was very apparent, with accommodation and jobs often beyond the reach of Irish people: 'No blacks. No dogs. No Irish.'[20]

Winston, in her case study of Irish-born people living in England, which is based on a sample of Irish people who emigrated during the waves of relocation in the 1950s and 1980s, suggests that the two groups, in spite of the passing of three decades, show: '… remarkable similarities in the difficulties they encounter in their lives as immigrants in Britain.'[21] She acknowledges how it is erroneously assumed that Irish people have few barriers to integration because language and cultures are perceived to be similar.[22] Winston succinctly presents the Irish as having: '…a distinctive cultural identity which embraces its history, language, religion, literature, music, sport, geography, landscape and way of life, each of which is different from its English counterpart'.[23] She refers particularly to the linguistic differences: '... While the language spoken by most Irish people today appears to be English, it is, in fact, "Hiberno-English", a mixture of Irish, the first "official language" of the country and English, its second "official language."'[24] Such differences have often been at the root of anti-Irish sentiment, with difference commonly being perceived as inferiority. Putting aside integration issues for a moment, it is important to differentiate between external and internal emotional factors which influence one's experience of emigration. Fr Bobby Gilmore reminds us that emigration *per se* involves a break in primary relationships and that this, in itself, is a cause of pain, irrespective of the reception the migrant experiences in the host nation.[25] J. A. Jackson's 1963 work on the Irish in Britain notes that the migration of Irish, Scots and Welsh to England is often presumed to be unproblematic and viewed merely as rural to urban migration.[26] However, he remarks, 'Such a view takes too little note of the personal upheaval and social difficulties involved in migration, the loneliness, the frustration, the longing which is the lot of those families and individuals who are driven by the restless tide through fortune and misfortune to make new homes as exiles on an alien soil.'[27] Jackson continues:

> Migration like all forms of change must involve a certain degree of risk. The whole process of personal upheaval, the breaking and making of relationships; the inadequate preparation given by one cultural background for life in another; the heartaches and keening, the fears and uncertainties which all immigrants experience 'in a strange land' are part of the price that must be paid. So too are the social consequences of population movement-anomie, overcrowding, medical and criminal problems, maladjustment, illegitimacy and prostitution.[28]

Nineteenth Century Emigration

Jackson's work spans a broad period of migration history and, in it, he argues that the pattern of emigration from Ireland to Britain and beyond had been established half a century before the Famine of the mid-nineteenth century.[29] He refers to the *The Royal Commission for inquiring into the condition of the poorer classes in Ireland* which gave a comprehensive report on *The Irish Poor in Great Britain*[30] as an appendix to a larger study of the Irish Poor Law. He suggests the tide of emigration from Ireland to Britain had been flowing through the 1820s, 1830s and 1840s, reaching a peak in the 1850s and receding thereafter.[31] His figures for the numbers of Irish born in England, Scotland and Wales from 1841 to 1951 are given in Table 1.

Twentieth Century Emigration

Many commentators have remarked on the poor performance of the Irish economy after independence. Jackson argues that the second wave of emigration from Ireland to Britain began after the Easter Rising of 1916 and the turbulent period which followed, a period that coincided with more restrictive immigration regulations in the US.[32] He describes the effect of Irish independence on the Irish in Britain, referring to the active cells of the IRA which existed in British cities such as Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, London and also in Scotland.[33] He gives an account of the damage done to warehouses

Table 1. Irish-born in England and Wales and Scotland in relation to total population, 1841-1951

	England and Wales		Scotland	
Date	**Number of Irish-born**	**% of total population**	**Number of Irish-born**	**Number of Irish-born**
1841	289,404	1.8	126,321	4.8
1851	519,959	2.9	207,367	7.2
1861	601,634	3.0	204,083	6.7
1871	566,540	2.5	207,770	6.2
1881	562,374	2.2	218,745	5.9
1891	458,315	1.6	194,807	4.8
1901	426,565	1.3	205,064	4.6
1911	375,325	1.0	174,715	3.7
1921	364,747	1.0	159,020	3.3
1931	381,089	0.9	124,296	2.6
1951	627,021	1.4	89,007	1.7

Source: Table taken from Jackson[162]

in Liverpool in 1920 and a window-breaking campaign in London in 1921.[34] He also describes demonstrations outside Wormwood Scrubs Prison, where Irish prisoners were on hunger strike, and the ensuing conflict with the host community.[35]

The Thirties

In the 1930s and during and after the Second World War, Irish labour was actively recruited by British government agencies and private employers. Ó Gráda suggests that tariff protection had led to stagnation in Ireland, resulting in non-existent growth in the labour force in the period from Independence to 1950, a period during which

one million people emigrated.[36] Writing on the closed economy of the Emergency, Ó Gráda states: 'The Southern economy remained open in one important sense during 1939-1945; the emigrant outflow during the war years was very high, a reflection of both depressed conditions at home and buoyant demand for labour in Britain.'[37] The emigrants were mainly young, unskilled and semi-skilled workers, drawn by the real wage gap between Britain and Ireland. As Ó Gráda indicates, while wages in Ireland had fallen during the war years, in Britain they had risen by twenty per cent.[38] During the Second World War, the Ministry for Labour issued permits to Irish workers who were required for civilian work. Healy, writing in 1968, in his poignant book looking at the heavy social price paid by Ireland as a result of mass emigration, remarked that in Britain:

> World War II was a licence to print money as long as you had that most valuable of raw material: people. We had people and we exported them faster than cattle and like cattle and while fathers, sons and daughters cried all the way to the train and the bus and the ship, the flow back of emigrant cheques and money orders evaporated the material and wifely tears so that on the thresholds of the Post Office or the Hibernian bank below in Main street you could smile a little more with every passing week.[39]

The lure of better pay and more regular work was not only of significance for those who emigrated. A number of authors highlight the impact on Ireland and its people of money sent home. Delaney discusses the importance of remittances and quotes Cowley and Rabbitte giving figures of £3 billion and £3.5 billion respectively sent to Ireland between 1939 and 1969.[40] Hannon indicates that about £20 million per annum was sent back to Ireland in the late 1960s.[41] Cowley also referred to the importance of remittances: 'Not only was the money vital in many instances but the character of the son or daughter, the degree to which they were seen by outsiders to honour their obligations was judged by the fidelity of their distractions.'[42]

Historian, Diarmaid Ferriter, in *The Transformation of Ireland,* refers to the Second World War as a watershed in that it was 'an era that

shattered the illusion that Ireland could continue to plan for the future on the basis of unfettered independence from the rest of the world'.[43] However, at the same time there was a traditional view. He refers to an internal, memorandum compiled by various government ministers which talks of emigration as, 'simply an old and evil tradition in this country with its roots deep in our national history'.[44] Following the Second World War, reconstruction provided a strong pull factor for migration to Britain, with plentiful demand in the building sector. In Ireland, inheritance patterns were a strong push factor, as were the lack of opportunities for marriage. Jackson refers to 'greater social freedoms' as an enticement for young people to emigrate.[45]

The British Welfare State: Pull Factor

Post-war Britain saw the development of a comprehensive welfare state, a National Health Service (NHS), free education, 'cradle to the grave' social security and, additionally, made inroads into improving the housing infrastructure. This was a huge pull factor for young Irish people with bleak prospects in their homeland. Welfare states don't develop overnight but, as Marshall indicates in his 1950 study of citizenship that the British welfare state was:

> ... the culmination of a long movement of social reform that began in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. But the final product was something that the originators of the movement had not envisaged. The forces of growth within the movement itself, combined with the influence of historic events like the great depression and the two world wars, gave this product of an evolutionary process a revolutionary character.[46]

After the First World War, there was an increased admission of collective responsibility for social problems. Social security principles were increasingly significant in social and economic policies, and there was a shift from relief to rights. The International Labour Organization (ILO), created as part of the Treaty of Versailles in 1919, spread the idea of minimum social standards in the belief that, through justice,

peace could be accomplished.[47] In the inter-war years, state social insurance and protection were extended. The Great Depression led to more reforms with more groups compulsorily covered and for broader risks. The British post-war welfare state was based on the two pillars of Keynesian economics, which encouraged state intervention to ensure a high level of economic activity, and the Beveridge model of social insurance.[48] The former encouraged state intervention to ensure a high level of economic activity, and the latter encompassed the Beveridge idea of social insurance. Alcock and colleagues, in their general introduction to social policy, suggest that the collective experience of the Second World War was a 'seed bed' for the post-war welfare state, asserting:

> The experience of the war years, of collective deprivation and a collective, state, response, reinforced that feeling. The calls by Keynes and Beveridge for a twin pillar approach of full employment and a welfare state looked increasingly attractive and the Labour party became identified with the crucial social issues of the day. All of these factors then, we might say, set the seal on the post-war orthodoxy of social reform and welfare statism.[49]

In a similar vein, Cole and Furbey state: 'it is impossible to discuss the genesis of the modern British welfare state without acknowledging the effects of the wartime experience on generating a collectivist spirit, support for government intervention and a determination to avoid a return to the means-tested ravages of the inter-war depression'.[50] Furthermore, they argue: 'the battery of state legislative measures introduced by the 1945-50 Labour Government, was, therefore, the realisation of a popular mood for state planning, control and intervention on an unprecedented scale in peacetime.'[51]

The Beveridge Report

During the Second World War, an interest in welfare reform developed alongside a concern that the system, as it stood, was inefficient. The

Committee on Social Insurance and Allied Services was established in June 1941 by the British Minister of Labour to inquire into the social security system. *Social Insurance and Allied Services*[52] was the blueprint for the modern British welfare state and is commonly referred to by the name of its author, William Beveridge (1879–1963). The Beveridge Report, which was the best-selling official publication of the twentieth century, proposed a 'cradle to the grave' system for all British citizens.[53] It formed the basis of the Labour government's (1945–51) programme for reform. It presented proposals for a national health service, family allowance, full employment and a comprehensive system of social insurance. It was seen as progress against the 'five giants' of Want, Ignorance, Squalor, Idleness and Disease. It was based on three guiding principles: blending of experience of the past, comprehensive social planning and cooperation between voluntary and public action and between the individual and the state. It designed a social insurance scheme which would provide a safety net in times when earning was interrupted, and at times of special events such as childbirth, marriage and death. It proposed flat rate contributions and benefits, simplification of administrative responsibility and comprehensive coverage. It proposed guiding principles for a social insurance policy. In times of sickness, retirement, unemployment and widowhood, benefits would be paid to those who had contributed. The report was used by the Ministry of Information asa means of fostering wartime morale.[54] It was viewed as revolutionary and, on publication, sold 100,000 copies within a month.[55] A special cheap edition was printed for circulation in the armed forces.[56] It was circulated among underground movements in Nazi-occupied countries and was viewed as propagandist in Germany.[57] The National Insurance Act of 1946 introduced a comprehensive social security system. Contributors were entitled to claim unemployment benefits, sickness benefits, dependants' allowances, maternity payments, retirement pensions and a death grant. The 1948 National Assistance Act allowed for means-tested payments for those ineligible for insurance payments. In the same year the National Health Service was introduced. Four years earlier, the 1944 Education Act established a universal system of free, compulsory schooling from age five to fifteen. This added to the need for a school building programme.

Housing Crisis in Britain

In addition to the attractions of the newly emerging welfare state, there was a housing crisis in post-war Britain which led to building policies which needed labourers. Half a million homes had been destroyed in the wartime bombings and those returning from war were in need of accommodation. Cole and Furbey note that 'Adolf Hitler proved a more decisive influence than William Beveridge in shaping the housing requirements of post-war Britain. Subsequent policies were dominated by a single objective: meeting the housing shortage.' [58] They indicate that little repair work was done during the war and that the number of households had increased from 11.75 million to 12.25 million.[59] In *Introducing Social Policy*, Alcock and colleagues indicate that 3.5 million dwellings were 'either wholly destroyed or substantially damaged by air raids by 1945'.[60] Only 190, 000 properties were built during the war. Building was a challenge in post-war Britain, with little or no foreign currency to pay for imports. Prices had increased, bui lding supplies and skilled labour were in short supply and poor weather conditions and spending controls from 1947 onwards exacerbated the situation. In *Introducing Social Policy,* we hear: 'It was really only as a result of the second world war, and the effects of the civilian bombing together with the desire to fulfil the promises of the "khaki election" to build homes for heroes, that housing policy was placed more centrally on the policy stage. The programmes of slum clearance continued, although priorities began to change.'[61]

By 1945, the Ministry of Reconstruction estimated that three-quarters of a million new dwellings were required for families and that a further half a million were needed for slum clearance and overcrowding.[62] Local authority housing starts were 163,518 in 1946 and in 1951, the figures were similar with 170,857.[63] There were 124,455 prefabricated dwellings in England and Wales by 1948, and 939,000 council houses were built between 1952 and 1956.[64] The post-war housing programme achieved more than its First World War equivalent. The programme kept pace with the rapid growth in households, although there was no net improvement overall.[65]

Ireland: Push Factor

Analysis of the international impact of these developments in Britain indicates that, 'The advent of the welfare state in Britain, the first in the world, made shock waves around the world, no more so than in Ireland.'[66] While the end of the Second World War did not represent a major upheaval for Ireland in terms of returning soldiers and re-building of infrastructure, 'the absence of universal, or even widespread, public health, education and social services did not pass in silence.'[67] We hear of how, 'The wave of discussion that followed the publication in Britain of the Beveridge Report ...by laying down a programme through which poverty could be abolished in an entire nation, attracted attention far beyond its country of origin.'[68] Pointing to its adaptation in many countries in continental Europe, analysis suggests that its impact was even stronger in Ireland: 'There was mobility of labour between Ireland and Britain. If the standard of British social services rose still further beyond those in Ireland, emigration was likely to reach even greater heights. Again, such migrants as did return to Ireland were likely to become centres of discontent if nothing was done to narrow the gap.[69] Even though a welfare state did eventually arrive in Ireland, it was developed slowly and incrementally and never to the same extent, remaining much more selective than in Britain.

In Ireland, in 1947,the Department of Local Government and Public Health was replaced by two new departments: the Department of Social Welfare, responsible for the provision of income maintenance services and the Department of Health, retaining a minor role in social welfare provision. In Ireland, a two-tiered income maintenance system persisted with some of the payments based on the insurance/contributory principle. Differential status is maintained to this day through a system of compulsory social insurance contributions by which eligibility for benefit payments is determined. Status differentiated payments are gender-biased as they favour the worker who has continuous and full time employment and in the Ireland of the 1940s and 1950s this tended to be men. Historically, most women in Ireland, as in many other countries, have typically gained welfare entitlements by virtue of their dependency status within the family as wives and mothers. This

idea was based on the assumption that the division of labour followed 'naturally' from women's capacity for physiological motherhood. Single women paid equal contributions to men but received lower payments. Rates of contribution varied according to age and gender, and married women were classed as dependent on their husbands. While married women who remained in the workforce paid lower rates of contribution, they received lower payments, reflecting the male-breadwinner model. For the male breadwinner model to succeed there is a need for women to remain marginal to the paid labour market. Means tested benefits, lack of childcare provision and community care policies are all based on the principle of subsidiarity and echo Catholic social teaching that the family is a natural unit and is the basic unit of organization in society. As such, the Church maintains, the family must provide for itself with the state intervening only as a last resort. Subsidiarity has very particular consequences for women. It emphasizes the role of mother within the family as the primary caregiver. These sentiments, institutionalized in the 1937 Irish Constitution, echo the 1931 papal encyclical, *Quadrogessimo Anno,* which states that: 'it is an injustice and at the same time a grave evil and disturbance of right order to assign to a greater and higher association what lesser and subordinate organizations can do'.[70]

The Beveridge Report was influential as regards income maintenance but the adoption of a fully comprehensive national health service was never a reality in Ireland. The strength of Catholic social teaching and adherence to the principal of subsidiarity ensured this, as did the vested interests of the medical profession as is evident in the debacle surrounding the Mother and Child Scheme. Research refers to the introduction of Children's Allowances in Ireland as 'one of the few battles that the forces of resistance lost'.[71] It was not until 1944, after five years of political wrangling, that the payment was introduced under the Children's Allowances Act. Even then it was not paid for each child but for the third and subsequent children in any family.

1940s Ireland

In 1946, the population of Ireland was less than three million.[72] The birth rate was 21.5 per 1000 persons.[73] The average number of

children was eight per family in 1911 and five in 1946, still double that of Britain.[74] Sixty percent of the population lived in the countryside or towns with fewer than 1,500 inhabitants.[75] There were 310,265 houses in the country without any sanitary facilities.[76] Less than a third of households had more than four rooms and nearly half of 600,000 households had no sanitary facilities.[77] Ten years later, 61.3 per cent of households did not have piped water.[78] Of the 250,000 houses that did have piped water, only 100,000, 15 per cent of all households at the time, had the use of a bath or shower.[79] In Lent, during the great freeze 1946-47, the Archbishop of Dublin gave disposition from fasting because of malnutrition.[80]

Ireland in the late 1940s had a rural economy. Electrification of rural Ireland began in 1946.[81] More than half the men and a quarter of the women in the labour force were involved in agriculture.[82] Almost 600,000 had agricultural occupations.[83] They were classified as proprietors, relatives assisting or employees.[84] The workforce fell from 1,228,000 in 1946 to 1,053,000 in 1961.[85] Women's labour market participation was confined to younger age groups and a restricted number of occupations. The largest occupational category for women was personal services with 79,000 women employed as domestic servants.[86] Of the 37,000 women in the professions, 30,000 were classified as nuns, nurses and teachers.[87] After 1947, males and females could emigrate with travel permits to take up any work. In 1947, the Catholic Hierarchy made a statement regarding concern for the large numbers of women emigrating.[88] Over 70 per cent of applicants for travel documents between 1947 and 1951 were under 30, and 72 percent of women applicants were under 24.[89] Delaney has put forward an interesting argument, stating that if emigration had been restricted:

> ...the impact on Irish society would have been far reaching. With no possible outlet for the unemployed and under employed, a reduction in the income of many households as a result of a lower level of migrant remittances, and thousands of people back in Ireland without work seeking welfare payments from an already depleted exchequer, the potential for social unrest

> would have been greatly increased. This social unrest could have resulted in the development of the politics of class, an otherwise absent theme in post-war Irish politics.[90]

In 1949, Ireland had the highest rate of infant and maternal mortality in Europe, with the crude death rate standing at 12.7 per 1,000 births and maternal deaths at about 100 a year.[91] One child in 16 did not live to its fifth birthday.[92] Of the infants, 13.4 per cent of those who died, died from diarrhoea and enteritis and13.3 per cent from pneumonia.[93] Half of all deaths of 25-34 year olds were from TB.[94] In 1949, 91 per cent of Ireland's exports went to the UK and £44 million of £61 million exports were of live animals and food.[95] The push factors were piled high.

1950s Emigration

Historians 'have invariably used such words as "doom", "drift", "stagnation", "crisis" and "malaise" to describe Ireland south of the border in the 1950s.'[96] When Ferriter examines this linguistic trend, he suggests that: 'at home economic malaise was eating away at Irish confidence like a cancer.'[97] The 1952 Fianna Fáil budget led to many years of economic stagnation. Irish economic growth was slower than anywhere else in Europe.[98] Ó Gráda makes the situation clear: 'The 1950s, a miserable decade for the Irish economy, were ushered in by a balance of payment crisis'.[99] In *A Rocky Road*, he reproduces a cartoon from the satirical monthly *Dublin Opinion* from 1956 which shows a map of Ireland with a sign saying:'Shortly Available Underdeveloped Country. Owners Going Abroad'.[100]

The unemployment payment for a family in the 1950s was fifty shillings, regardless of the number of children.[101] In 1954, unemployment stood at 86,604.[102] Despite the fact that six thousand people lived in Dublin slums, builders were unemployed, with employment in the building trade falling from 74,000 in 1955 to 56,000 in 1958.[103] Employment in industry fell by 38,000 or 14 per cent of the industrial labour force between 1951 and 1959, while between 1941 and 1961 the agricultural workforce was depleted by 200,000.[104]

The 1951 Census showed that 466,981 people living in England and Wales were from independent Ireland and 131,955 from Northern Ireland, an increase of 65 per cent in 20 years.[105] In the post-war period, Irish labour was essential for reconstructing Britain. The welfare state and the NHS, and its infrastructure, provided ample work for Irish men, while Irish women obtained work in the service and healthcare sectors. The National Motorways Programme of the mid-1950s and the power station programme of the 1960s also provided work. In 1958, nearly 50,000 individuals emigrated from Ireland.[106] It is reported that 64,494 and 72,962 new insurance cards were issued to immigrants from the Irish Republic in 1959 and 1961 respectively, and these figures did not include workers from Northern Ireland or those below the school-leaving age.[107] Neither did they include non-working dependants. In 1961, Ireland had its lowest ever recorded population of 2.8 million[108] while Britain was the most heavily urbanized country in the western world. Delaney indicates the contrasts emphatically:

> Ireland's geographical location next to one of the world's most advanced economies underscored the contrasting lifestyles available in the two countries... newspapers and radio offered glimpses of a different way of life based on material wellbeing, a consumer-based social scene organised around popular activities such as dancing and going to the cinema, and, most importantly, a vision of a future that centred on the fulfilment of individual aspirations. In other words, what have become to be seen as central features of the "modern" world were obtainable just across the water.'[109]

Emigration was not only an attractive prospect to men. Throughout the late 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, Irish women were recruited through large advertisements in Irish newspapers to train as nurses in Britain. They were needed during the war and afterwards to work in the National Health Service. While in Ireland most hospitals demanded a fee from young women to train as nurses, British hospitals did not and, in addition, they paid a small salary. An article in *The Irish Post* stated:

> They were also part of the cream of Irish young womanhood in the Fifties—bright girls who had a most sincere commitment to medicine. There can hardly be a single person, of whatever nationality, who was hospitalised in this country in the Fifties or the Sixties, who doesn't remember with affection a caring and conscientious Irish nurse.[110]

There is reference to Irish women emigrants being found in 'job ghettoes' of domestic service and female factory work in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.[111] After the Second World War they were found in banks, nursing and secretarial work and by the 1980s they worked across wider occupations.[112] The Irish Countrywomen's Association (ICA) submission to the 1951 Commission on Emigration shows a concern with the status of women workers: '…our members are emphatic that loss of social standing is involved in entering domestic service in Ireland, but menial work may be undertaken in England without such loss'.[113] This observation was echoed by the Irish Housewives Association: 'the domestic worker in Great Britain gets recognition as a human being while she does not get it here.'[114] In the late 1950s, an estimated 15,000 Irish migrants, mostly women, worked in hotels, clubs and cafes in the West End.[115] Of the 2,700 staff in the Cumberland Hotel, 90 per centwere Irish.[116] The 1951 Census of England and Walesshows that over a quarter of all economically active Irish females were 'persons engaged in personal service', domestic servants, cleaners, and waitresses.[117] A sixth of Irish-born women in England and Wales in 1951 were professional: nurses and midwives mostly.[118] The Diocese of Westminster dealt with applications from 1,693 pregnant Irish women between 1950 and 1953; 28 per cent had conceived in Ireland.[119]

Research referred to above by MacLaughlin highlights the sexist bias in historical studies of Irish emigration which has compounded the male image of the emigrant, despite the fact that it has long been known that Irish women have been as migratory as men. He writes:

> Women are now written into the history of Irish emigration. There is nothing new about the discovery of women on the

> emigrant trail. What is new is that they are now being taken seriously by students of Irish emigration, especially by Irish feminists and female historians…. In the past women have regularly outnumbered men on the emigrant trail and they emigrated for quite different reasons than men. Their leaving impacted strongly on the social structure of rural and small town communities.[120]

Ferriter indicates that for every 1,000 males emigrating between 1946 and 1951 there were 1,365 females.[121] Clearly, *The Report of the Commission on Youth Unemployment 1951*, laid out political and social thinking which did not align with a huge number of young Irish people of the time. The report stated: 'domestic service helps to train a girl for her natural vocation—the care and management of home and children.'[122] It encouraged youth: 'to take a useful part in the economic life of the country',[123] and touched on many topics including youth unemployment, the training of youth, the physical development of young people and juvenile delinquency. Its objectives were to submit recommendations 'designed to afford the boys and girls of this country a better opportunity of becoming useful citizens of a Christian state, adequately instructed in the teachings of religion, healthy in mind and body willing and able to work for their own benefit and that of their country'.[124] The report chastizes the individual who 'is turning more and more to the state to look after him in illness, unemployment and old age'.[125] In contrast with the ideals and encouragements of the report, the reality was such that,between 1951 and 1961, 412,000 people emigrated from Ireland and in 1956 and 1957 Ireland was the only country in Europe in which the total volume of goods and services consumed fell.[126]

As the twentieth century progressed, the profile and settlement patterns of Irish emigrants to Britain changed. The post-war wave of emigrants tended to be poorly skilled, with low levels of education and lack of preparation, money, resources and access to accommodation and information. This assertion is borne out by Delaney who indicates that: 'Only a minority of the Irish in Britain had completed education beyond primary schooling. By the mid-1950s roughly two thirds of

young adults leavings school in independent Ireland did so at the age of 14, having completed primary education.'[127] They tended to settle in cities like Birmingham and Coventry and were involved in construction and domestic work. MacLaughlin refers to emigration as a 'hidden injury' of class which has affected the sons and daughters of small farming and working-class families more than other sectors of Irish society.'[128] In *The Men Who Built Britain*, Cowley quotes Michael Watt, an Irish navvy:

> I can only speak with experience of the late 1950s and 1960s, but it was mostly a bastard of a job—dirty, often dangerous—and a hard and bleak life interposed with wondrous moments of comradeship, happy drinking bouts and the odd scrap. I deduced that a lot of the Irish navvies had no idea where exactly they were geographically and, more often than not, they did not care as long as there was good overtime, the ability to sub and occasional craic.[129]

He talked of his understanding of: 'The intensely lonely times that those men experience away from their family and friends, and the paradoxical dark and light side of Ireland which frequently surfaced in these men's dispositions and personalities'.[130] A Radharc television documentary filmed in Oldbury work camp in 1965 showed men who described the daily reality of their lives in Britain.[131] Cowley refers to the common joke in the west of Ireland in the 1960s: 'Who made the world?' 'McAlpine, Sir, and my daddy laid the bricks'.[132] Writing in *The Irish Post,* alongside a series of photographs taken of the Irish community in Britain by P. J. Fahey, one unidentified writer states:

> Next to the Famine and the years immediately after it in the middle of the 19th century, the 1950s were the great years of Irish emigration. Approximately half a million Irish people came to Britain during that decade. They were the flower of Ireland's young manhood and womanhood. They came mainly from what were the most rural parts of Europe and they settled in what were the most urbanised parts. They settled in big cities, with

> their tall grey buildings, their factories and their crowded streets. All of the Irish who came left stable family environments, close-knit communities and codes of conduct and morality which had been established over centuries. For many there was a huge culture shock in coming here. The change of environment could not be more contrasting. Never before had such a proportion of any nation emigrated in such a short period of time. Certainly, never in the history of the human race had a large proportion emigrated to what was historically 'enemy territory.'[133]

The article recalls the remarkable success of the Irish in Britain, when one considers 'all of the sociological, emotional, historical, educational and economic factors.'[134] It recalls that many of them, who had never seen a city before, forged new lives in the major British cities: 'There should have been massive casualties. Considering the numbers who came, the casualties were comparatively few. Displaying extraordinary resilience and optimism, they got on with it and they did remarkably well'.[135]

1980s Emigration

Years of borrowing and spending in the 1970s, along with a second oil price crisis in 1979, led to economic problems developing in 1980s Ireland. National debt rocketed whilst the number of people at work remained relatively static, despite a huge growth in the labour market caused by the 1960s baby boom. Increased unemployment was followed by increased emigration. Over 200,000 people left Ireland in the 1980s, with the majority emigrating in the latter part of the decade.[136] More males than females emigrated in the 1980s because of the construction downturn and the increasing integration of women into the Irish labour force'.[137] The majority were aged between fifteen and twenty-four and were better educated than previous generations of emigrants. Emigration reached a peak in 1989 with 70,000 individuals leaving Ireland.[138]

MacLaughlin suggests that Irish academics during the 1980s knew more about the emigration of farm labourers in post-Famine Ireland

and the status of Irish emigrants in Victorian England than they did about the contemporary emigration of young school leavers and their status abroad.[139] He argues that the idea that emigration from Ireland is voluntary:

> …ignores the structural causes and functional roles of emigration, both at local and national level…(and) 'particularly ignores its role in alleviating youth unemployment and unemployment assistance at home and as the provider of a reserve of both cheap and highly skilled labour abroad.It also ignores the contribution of emigration to the lowering of wage levels in 'emigrant blackspots' where young adults may be accepting lower living standards in the local community as the price to be paid for not joining the emigrant trail.[140]

MacLaughlin refers to structural issues as including:

> Changes in class structure, education, technology, urban and rural relationships, and the changing functional relationships between regional labour pools in this country and overseas labour markets, particularly in Britain. Structural change at this level has regularly impacted on local communities by causing widespread emigration. It continues to do so today ….In explaining away emigration as an inevitable response to the modernisation of Irish society since the nineteenth century, historians and other social scientists have depoliticised the causes of Irish emigration and 'denationalised' its solutions.[141]

In *Destination and Social Characteristics of Recent Emigration from the West and Southwest of Ireland*, MacLaughlinwarns against the 'naturalisation' of Irish emigration.[142] He suggests that emigration had begun to affect more and more middle-class families and had extended to urban areas and middle-class suburbs throughout the country;it was no longer only a rural or working class phenomenon affecting the west of Ireland. He assertsthat there may have been more young people leaving the country than indicated by national estimates and warned against 'the

"gentrified" image of contemporary emigration as a voluntary activity of highly-skilled and well-educated, upwardly mobile young adults'.[143] He argues that: 'media bias and official perceptions contributed to the "sanitisation" and "gentrification" of modern Irish emigration and caused a disproportionate amount of attention to be devoted to its qualitative aspects, to the relative neglect of its regional and quantitative aspects'.[144] In a survey conducted between February and May 1989, which targeted 3,399 families with at least one member in post-intermediate, second-level education (covering more than 9,000 young adults of 16 and over), MacLaughlin examined the incidence of emigration in this age group and the characteristics of those who had recently left Ireland.[145] The age structure of recent emigrants was given, along with their destinations, technical and educational qualifications prior to leaving, and the number of times they returned home in the months prior to the survey. It focused on Cork City, Southwest Kerry, South Limerick, East Galway and North Donegal.

> Emigration not only affects emigrants and young people, although it particularly affects the latter, many of whom are forced to emigrate while still teenagers. It also affects their families and communities left behind. Emigration leaves gaps in families and causes imbalances in rural and urban communities. It helps to maintain the political status quo by removing young people from their home area just at the age when they are eligible to vote.[146]

MacLaughlin states that this situation was particularly true of Northern Ireland in the 1950s and 1960s, when outmigration of large numbers of Catholic and young adults kept the national community in a permanent socio-economic and political minority.[147]

Quite apart from the social and economic impact of migration on Ireland in the 1980s, there were huge social barriers for individuals. We hear of the conflict for Irish emigrants who were denied ethnic minority status because they were white and because of the close proximity of the two countries, yet Irish people were repeatedlystereotyped because of anti-IRA fears over several decades.[148] Garrett, for example, refers to the failure in British social policy and social work to 'recognise

the specificity of Irish people'.[149] He refers to the black/white binary limiting debate [150] and recognizes the success of the voluntary sector in having a self-identifying Irish category included in the 2001 Census.[151]

Twenty-first century emigration

Irish people continued to emigrate during the Celtic Tiger era.[152] Bertie Ahearn, in his resignation speech of April 2008, at a time when unemployment was about five per cent, claimed he had 'delivered a modern economy with sustainable growth in employment and brought an end to the days of forced migration'.[153] Academics such as Glynn argue that the return of high levels of emigration has become one of the most debated and sensitive topics in Ireland and that there is an urgent need for an informed policy debate which recognizes the complexity of the associated policyissues.[154] He and his colleagues emphasize how emigration has been a factor for every generation of Irish society inthe last two hundred years and they remark on the heterogeneity of emigrants and the number of 'types' of emigrant.[155] They found that the current wave of migrants is better educated than the general population which leads to fear of 'brain drain'.[156] Ireland has experienced significantly higher levels of emigration per capita than other Western European countries affected by the Eurozone crisis. Emigration is affecting rural Ireland more than urban Ireland.[157] Forty-seven per centof Ireland's emigrants were employed full-time prior to emigration.[158] The vast majority, over seventy per cent,is in their twenties.[159] Sixteen percent of households have experienced the emigration of a member since 2006.[160] 'Ireland trails behind the rest of Europe and many countries worldwide in its attitude toward emigrant voting.' [161]

Analysis of Irish migration to Britain over decades shows that there are many facets to this complex and ongoing issue: personal, social, economic and political. It is in this context that we can begin to examine how well-placed the Catholic Church was,and is,to respond to the difficulties and challenges raised by migration and faced by individuals experiencing it on an emotional and day-to-day level. Explicit Catholic teaching on migration gave the Church one of the broadest and most humane views of the phenomenon of any institution.

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2

The Church and Migration: Universal and Local

The story of Irish migration through the centuries is one woven together from many strands. The personal tragedies and triumphs of individual migrants are inseparable from the political wranglings over the migrant issue and decision-making on a national level about responses to migration. The social phenomena both in Ireland and Britain, which accompanied mass migrations, are inextricably linked with economic factors including very basic issues such as housing, earnings and social security.

There were two clear factors in the mix which allowed the Catholic Church to become a major player in the migrant issue in the middle of the twentieth century. The first, quite simply, relates to the prominence of the Church at all levels of society in Ireland at the time.The second relates to the explicit teaching of the Church on migrant issues and the inspiration derived from the Scriptures. 'I was a stranger and you made me welcome' (*Mt* 25:35), is at the core of the Catholic Church's humane and remarkable response to the desperation of many Irish migrants in Britain in the form of the development of the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy.

This depth of teaching on migration by the Church isencapsulated in papal encyclicals, statements and pastoral letters. However, perhaps

moreimportantly, elements of Catholic Social Teaching on migration appear inthe annual reports that every Bishops' Conference (groups of dioceses that have territorial boundaries) submit to the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People in Rome. This ongoing concern makes for a dynamic and adaptive response to ever-changing issues.

In order to understand fully the work of the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy in Britain, it is important to place the Chaplaincy in its larger ecclesial context. The Catholic Church is organized as a single hierarchical structure for the whole island. It is dividedinto four provinces: Armagh, Dublin, Cashel and Tuam, with twenty-eight dioceses. Each bishop is the authority for his own diocese and matters affecting the Church are discussed at quarterly meetings of the Irish Hierarchy in Maynooth.From its earliest days, the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy reached out to emigrants from the whole island of Ireland. One initiative that illustrates this is the Two-Island Liaison Committee between the Irish Bishop's Conference and the Bishop's Conference of England and Wales which was set up in the 1980s. This body addressed matters that were of common interest to both jurisdictions, including emigration from Ireland to England and Wales.

The majority of clergy ordained in Ireland were educated in the National Seminary in Maynooth. A smaller number were educated in seminaries in Dublin, Thurles, Waterford and Belfast among others, while an even smaller number were ordained in Rome.Those who were members of religious orders were often educated in these seminaries but had their own houses of formation which imbued them with the particular charism of their founder or order. Many of those interviewed for this study spoke of the theological formation they received and the manner in which it formed and guided their work.

Chaplaincy personnel spoke with admiration of theologians of the calibre of Frs.Pat Hannon, Dermot Lane and Bernard Treacywho were an important part of the Chaplaincy and noted the significance of their contribution. This ongoing theological influence and formation helped to develop a very particular set of skills which enabled those working on the ground to develop a more reflective practice. Others talked of the excitement and dynamism which increasingly characterized their

general theological education in the late-1960s and 1970s and which they felt influenced their work with the Chaplaincy. Even though the initiatives of the Irish Chaplaincy may appear to be unique; the Universal Church can trace its commitment to the pastoral care of migrants back to nineteenth century Italy.

In 1887, Bishop John Scalabrini(proclaimed Blessed by Pope John Paul II in 1997) founded the Congregation of the Missionaries of St Charles now known as the ScalabrinianFathers and Brothers. Conscious of the sense of loss and the difficulties faced by Italian emigrants on reaching their new homelands, Scalabriniset out to support their Catholic faith and practice in the New World. Today, they and their sister organizations, the Missionary Sisters of St. Charles Borromeo (founded by Scalabrini on 25 October 1895) and theSecular Institute of the Scalabrinian Missionary Women (founded on 25 July 1961), minister to migrants, seafarers, refugees and displaced persons.[1] In the memorandum, *Pro Emigratis Catholicis,* Scalabrini proposed that the Holy See establisha Pontifical Congregation (or Commission) for all Catholic Emigrants.[2] This Commission should be composed of representatives of different nations for the purpose ofthe'…spiritual assistance of emigrants in varied circumstances and in various stages of the phenomenon, especially in the Americas, to thus keep the Catholic faith alive in their hearts'.[3]

In 1912, and on recognizing the specific needs of migrants as highlighted by the work of the Scalabrinian Religious, the first Office for Migration Problemswas set up by Pope Pius X. The role and purpose of this new office was contextualized in the publication of the document *EthnograficaStudia* in 1914 which addressed the issue of the need to care for migrant peoples.[4] The document stressed the responsibility of the local church inassisting migrants and suggested that 'the local clergy be given specific preparation for this, linguistically, culturally and pastorally'.[5] The Decree *Magni Semper* of 1918, following the promulgation of the Code of Canon Law, gave the Consistorial Congregation competence for matters concerning the authorization of clergy to assist migrants.[6]

In 1951, in the wake of the Second World Warand themassive displacement of people, the International Catholic Migration Commission was established by the Holy See to assist and support the

work of National Bishops' Conferences throughout the world. The Commission's headquarters is in Geneva and has administrative offices throughout the world and a series of field offices in significant places.

In 1952, Pope Pius XII's Apostolic Constitution, *Exsul Familia* (On the Spiritual Care of the Migrant)[7] was written; itis 'considered the Magna Carta of the Church's thought on migration as the first official document of the Holy See to delineate the pastoral care of migrants globally and systematically from both the historical and canonical points of view'.[8] It affirmed that the primary responsibility for the pastoral care of migrants lay with the local diocesan bishop, even though the actual organization of the matter was still laid down by the Constitutional Congregation.[9] In *Exsul Familia*, Pope Pius XII reaffirmedthat migrants have a right to a life with dignity, and therefore a right to migrate toward that end.[10] The document stated:'Then, according to the teachings of *Rerum Novarum*, the right of the family to a life worthy of human dignity is recognized. When this happens, migration attains its natural scope...'[11] The document, *Rerum Novarum* (On the Condition of Labour), was promulgated byPope Leo XIII in 1891 and it establishedin Church Teaching that a person has a right to work, to survive and to support his or her family.[12] Later publications by the Church hold that, at times, migration is the only option for those who seek to uphold this right. These documents not only had a foundational influence on the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy as it emerged, they also provided a rich cultural context for initiatives that set out to better the life of migrants.

After the Second World War, in 1952, Pope Pius XII established the Higher Council for Emigration, then called the Congregation of Bishops due to the major displacement of people following the Second World Warand the changing nature of migration. In 1952, *Apostolatus Maris* (Apostleship of the Sea), was established to extend pastoral care to seafarers.[13] In 1958, Pope Pius XII granted the Council responsibility for providing spiritual assistance to the faithful associated with air travel, known as *Apostolatus Coeli o Aëris (Apostleship to those travelling by air).*[14]

The Second Vatican Councilformally opened under the pontificate of Pope John XXIII on 11 October 1962 and closed under Pope Paul VI on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception in 1965. Within its

deliberations, the Council gave consideration to the pastoralcare of migrants. In the 1963 papal encyclical, *Pacem in Terris* (Peace on Earth), Pope John XXIII clearly articulates the right of people to migrate and the right not to migrate: 'Every human being has the right to the freedom of movement and of residence within the confines of their country; and, when there are just reasons for it, the right to emigrate and take up residence elsewhere.'[15] Building on previous teachings, the Second Vatican Councilreaffirmed the right of people to emigrate, the dignity of migrants, the need to overcome inequalities in economic and social development and to provide an answer to the authentic needs of the human person.[16] In *Gaudiumet* Spes (The Church in the Modern World), it also acknowledged the right of public authorities to control the flow of migration.[17] Contemporary writings note that,'the Second Vatican Counciltherebymarked a decisive moment for the pastoral care of migrants and itinerant persons, attributing particular importance to the meaning of mobility and catholicity and that of particular Churches, to the sense of parish, and to the vision of the church as mystery of communion.'[18]

As the teaching and the understanding of the needs of migrants deepened, the structures within the Holy See adapted. For example, in 1965, Pope Paul VI founded the International Secretariat for the Direction of the *Apostolatus Nomadum* (Apostleship to Nomads), also at the Congregation of Bishops, with the aim of 'bringing spiritual comfort to a population that does not have a fixed abode or to those living in similar conditions'.[19] The same Pope, in 1967, promulgated *Populorum Progression* (On the Development of Peoples) in which he called for solidarity with those who seek to 'escape from hunger, misery, endemic disease and ignorance'.[20] Under the heading 'Welcoming the Stranger', Pope Paul VI said,'We cannot insist too much on the duty of giving foreigners a hospitable reception. It is a duty imposed by human solidarity and by Christian charity, and it is incumbent upon families and educational institutions in the host nations.'[21] Noting the particular vulnerability of young people, the document highlighted that:

> Young people, in particular, must be given a warm reception; more and more families and hostels must open their doors to

> them. This must be done, first of all, that they may be shielded from feelings of loneliness, distress and despair that would sap their strength. It is also necessary so that they may be guarded against the corrupting influence of their new surroundings, where the contrast between the dire poverty of their homeland and the lavish luxury of their present surroundings is, as it were, forced upon them. And finally, it must be done so that they may be protected from subversive notions and temptations to violence, which gain headway in their minds when they ponder their 'wretched plight'.[22]

Furthermore, it emphasized that '…they should be welcomed in the spirit of brotherly love, so that the concrete example of wholesome living may give them a high opinion of authentic Christian charity and of spiritual values', and emigrant workers should also be given a warm welcome.[23] Statements such as these show the dynamic between the teaching structures of the Church and the observations of those charged with the care of migrants in the many dioceses throughout the world.

Further developments in 1967 included the opening of an office at the Congregation of the Clergy which encouraged religious to provide support to all people within the tourism industry. However, with the Apostolic Letter, *Apostolicae Caritatis*, (Apostleship of Charity) of 1970,[24] responsibilities for the various sectors of human mobility were grouped together under one administrative area: the *Pontificia Commissio de Spirituali Migratorumat queItinerantium Cura*, (Pontifical Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migrant and Itinerant People)which was given a home at theCongregation of Bishops.

The increasing importance,in the eyes of the Catholic Church, of the pastoral care of migrant people worldwide was made more explicitin 1978 when the Pontifical Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migrant and Itinerant People addressed a circular letter to Episcopal Conferences across the world. The letter,entitled *The Church and Human Mobility,*[25] focused on the obligation of the local Church to 'welcome the stranger' and the role of men and women, religious and the lay faithful in this mission. It also stressed the importance of

intra-ecclesial collaboration between the churches that were sending emigrants and the churches who were receiving these same people as immigrants.[26]

In 1988 (28 June), Pope John Paul II, reorganized the Roman Curia (i.e. the various Pontifical Councils and Offices) with the publication of the Apostolic Constitution, *Pastor Bonus* (the Good Shepherd).[27] This gave the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People a renewed standing as it was named a Dicastery (Department) of the Holy See. What was once a 'Commission' of the Holy See was now a 'Council'.

A major landmark for the new Council was the publication in 2004 of *Erga Migrantes Caritas Christi* (The Love of Christ towards Migrants).[28] The document brought together the depth of commitment that the Church has to the care of migrants,the wisdom of well-developed pastoral practises and the contemporary challenges faced by migrants and those who care for them.It recognized that migration levels had reached an all-time high throughout the world and that, 'it is becoming an increasingly complex problem from the social, cultural, political, religious, economic and pastoral points of view'.[29] Providing an overview of previousstatements and documents by the Church on migration, it summarized:

> All this reveals important theological and pastoral insights. These include the centrality of the person of the migrant and the defence of his rights, the ecclesial and missionary dimension of migration itself, the consideration of the pastoral contribution of the lay faithful, the institutes of Consecrated Life and the Societies of Apostolic Life, the value of culture in the work of evangelization, the protection and the valorisation of minorities also in the local Church, the importance of ecclesial dialogue, both intra and extra, and finally, the specific contribution that migration can offer for universal peace.[30]

The prime purpose of the Instruction is 'to respond to the new spiritual and pastoral needs of migrants and to make migration more and more an instrument of dialogue and proclamation of the Christian message'.[31] The 2004 document acknowledged migration is

a challenge to the pastoral mission of the Church. Building on the writings and insights of Pope Paul VI and John Paul II, *Erga Migrantes* highlightedthe fundamental rights of the human person in the face of a globalizing world.According to the document, these rights include the right to emigrate, a view that has been continuously reflected in annual messages for the World Day for Migrants and Refugees.[32] Pope John Paul II strongly recommended the ratification of the *International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers* and the members of their families, which entered into force on 1 July 2003.[33]

Aside from theological statements, *ErgaMigrantes Caritas Christi*, has very practical advice and guidance for those charged with the care of the migrant. Themigrant chaplain,isa 'deacon of communion' and, 'Being a foreigner, he [is] a living reminder for thelocal Church, in all its components, of its characteristic catholicity, and the pastoralstructures he services will be a sign ... of a particular Church committed inpractice to a part of universal communion, with respect for legitimate diversities'.[34]

Erga Migrantes Caritas Christi mentions two groups in particular, those in religious orders and women, stating: 'We feel duty bound to remember the apostolate of religious women, so often dedicated to the pastoral care work of migrants, with specific *charisms* and performing works of great pastoral importance.'[35] It quotes from *Vita Consecrate* (the Post-SynodalApostolic Exhortation): 'likewise the future of re-evangelisation, as of all other forms of missionary activity, is unthinkable without a renewed contribution from women, especially consecrated women'.[36] It continues, ' it is therefore urgently necessary to take certain concrete steps, beginning by providing room for women to participate in different fields and at all levels, including decision-making processes, above all in matters which concern women themselves'.[37] Furthermore, it draws attention to the role of religious, referring to the Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangeliinuntiandi* (Evangelization in the Modern World):

> …by their lives they are sign of a total availability to God, the Church and the brethren. As such they have a special importance in evangelisation. At the same time as being a challenge to the world and to the church herself, this silent witness of poverty and

> abnegation, of purity and sincerity, of self-sacrifice in obedience, can become an eloquent witness capable of touching also non-Christians who have good will and are sensitive to certain lives.[38]

This contribution of women religious in the Catholic Church's dealings with migrants has been significant since its inception.

Erga Migrantes stressed the need for special preparation for specific pastoral work among migrants.[39] It identified the principal tasks of the pastoral worker among immigrants which include: safeguarding the migrants ethnic, cultural, linguistic and ritual identity; guidance along the way to authentic integration; incarnating a missionary and evangelising spirit; sharing the situation and conditions of migrants; the ability to adapt and make personal contacts in an atmosphere of a clear witness of life.[40]

These stages of development of the Holy See's understanding of the role of the Universal Church with regard to migrants both informs and contextualises the response of local Churches. For instance, in January 2003, underlying the imperative that churches which send and receive migrants must work together, the Catholic Bishops of Mexico and the United States issued a pastoral letter entitled, *Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope,*[41] in which they appliedthe teachings of Scripture and the Church to contemporary issues affecting the lives of migrants in their jurisdictions. Based on these teachings, the U.S. and Mexican Bishops articulated the following five principles that govern how the Church respondsto public policy proposals relating to immigration: persons have the right to find opportunities in their homeland; persons have the right to migrate to support themselves and their families; sovereign nations have aright to control their borders; refugees and asylum seekers should be afforded protection; the human rights and the human dignity of undocumented migrants should be respected.[42]

In 2008, in the United States, Pope Benedict XVI called on Americans:

> …to continue to welcome the immigrants who join your ranks today, to share their joys and hopes, to support them in their

> sorrow and trials, and to help them flourish in their new home. This, indeed, is what your fellow countrymen have done for generations. From the beginning, they have opened their doors to the tired, the poor, the "huddled masses yearning to breathe free". These are the people whom America has made her own… [43]

In a similar vein, and in a different setting,the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales published a document entitled *Mission of the Church to Migrants in England and Wales* in 2008 which stated:

> Over the last few years, there has been a transformation of the social character of the dioceses in England and Wales. Across the country in all our dioceses, we have migrants from nearly every continent in the world, adding people and vibrancy to our parishes. We the Bishops of England and Wales have been considering this new social reality with a view to issuing a statement calling for amore visible culture of welcome, hospitality and solidarity with our migrant sisters and brothers in God's family. We recognise and celebrate their rich cultural and spiritual patrimony and the ways in which they are enriching us as they join us in our parishes and dioceses. This statement, '*Mission of the Church to Migrants in England and Wales*' is the result.[44]

In 2009, in an address to the annual National Justice and Peace Conference (2009), Bishop Patrick Lynch, Chair of the Office of Migration and Refugee Policy of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, explainedwhataccompaniment or walking with people actually involves, while referring to the Gospel story of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus (*Lk* 24:13-35):

> It involves listening—listening to the stories, the struggles, the anxieties and the hopes of the two disciples. It involves sharing—a sharing of wisdom, information and advice, a sharing of faith and hope and last but not least the sharing of a meal...Finally accompaniment gives way to empowerment as the two disciples are

> transformed and return immediately to Jerusalem with new heart and new hope. At the beginning of the story the two disciples see Jesus and treat him as foreigner but through the warmth of his welcome, the wisdom of his knowledge, and through the fellowship of a meal they gradually come to see him not as a foreigner but as a brother and they see that their mission is to bring hope to the community in Jerusalem. Likewise our own experience with migrants and their families teaches us that welcoming and walking with always lead to empowering so that as people grow in knowledge and skills, in confidence and in hope they themselves—individually and collectively—are inspired and empowered to reach out to and work for justice for their fellow migrants.[45]

Lynch referred to the principles of Catholic Social Teaching promoting six key ideas in the context of welcoming migrants: the principle of human dignity; the principle of association and especially the right to have a family, to be a family and live as a family; the principle of participation and equality; the principle of preferential protection of the poor and the vulnerable; the principle for the common good; the principles of solidarity and subsidiarity.[46]

These examples show the rich interplay between the Universal Church and its local church communitiesas each tries to highlight the plight of the migrant and the duty of care that falls on the shoulders of both Church and society generally. Pope Francis has heightened the awareness of the duty of care that the global community shares for migrants. His first visit outside Rome was to the port of Lampedusain July 2013 where many migrants land as they make their way from Africa to Europe seeking better futures. He spoke there of the 'global indifference' towards migrants.[47] Sadly this 'indifference' saw tragic expression when, in October of that same year, Lampedusa witnessed the death of over 200 migrants when their boat capsized. No doubt these experiences informed his comments in the letter for the Annual World Migrant and Refugee Sunday, 2014 when he said:

> Migrants and refugees are not pawns on the chessboard of humanity. They are children, women and men who leave or who

> are forced to leave their homes for various reasons, who share a legitimate desire for knowing and having, but above all for being more. The sheer number of people migrating from one continent to another, or shifting places within their own countries and geographical areas, is striking. Contemporary movements of migration represent the largest movement of individuals, if not of peoples, in history. As the Church accompanies migrants and refugees on their journey, she seeks to understand the causes of migration, but she also works to overcome its negative effects, and to maximize its positive influence on the communities of origin, transit and destination.[48]

Pope Francis reinforced this message in July 2014:

> Globalisation is a phenomenon which calls us to question particularly one of its principalmanifestations, namely: emigration. It is one of the 'signs' of the time we live in and which brings us back to the words of Jesus: 'And why do you not judge for yourself what is right?' (*Lk* 12:57) Notwithstanding the great flow of migrants present on all the Continents and in nearly all Countries, migration is still seen as an emergency, or like a specific and sporadic fact, while it has become a characteristic component and a challenge to our societies. It is a phenomenon which holds great promise together with many challenges. Many people who are forced into emigration suffer and often die tragically; many of their rights are violated, they are obliged to separate from their families and, unfortunately, continue to be subjected to racist attitudes and xenophobia. Faced with this situation, I repeat what I stated in the Message for this year's World Day of Migrants and Refugees: "A change of attitude towards migrants and refugees is needed on the part of everyone, moving away from attitudes of defensiveness and fear, indifference and marginalization — all typical of a 'throwaway culture' — towards attitudes based on a culture of encounter, the only culture capable of building a better, more just and fraternal world."[49]

In Ireland in 2014, *Journeying Together Challenges Facing the Migrant Today*, a national conference commemorating the tenth anniversary of *Erga Migrantes Caritas Christi* explored both emigration and immigration in a global, European and Irish context. It was jointly organized by the Council for Emigrants and Council for Immigrants of the Irish Bishops' Conference. It endorsed the Catholic perspective on migration, based on Catholic Social Teaching.This reflects the ethos of *ErgaMigrantes Caritas Christi*:

> It is essential that the Churches of departure and arrival establish an intense collaboration with one another. This begins first with the reciprocal exchange of information on matters of common pastoral interest. It is unthinkable that these churches should fail to dialogue with one another and systematically discuss, even in periodic meetings, problems concerning thousands of migrants.[50]

Erga Migrantes Caritas Christi recommended that Episcopal conferences should appoint a National Director to animate the corresponding Diocesan Commissions. Thus, 'spiritual assistance for persons far from their home country will appear as a clear ecclesiastical commitment, a pastoral task that cannot simply be left to the generosity of individuals, presbyters, religious men or women, or lay faithful, but sustained, even materially, by the local Churches'.[51] Addressing the 2014 conference, ArchbishopDiarmuid Martin, Archbishop of Dublin and Vice President of the Irish Bishops' Conferencestated:

> I welcome this Conference because it is a forum in which part of that examination of conscience of which I spoke can take place and where we can look calmly and rationally at all dimensions of the theme of migration, placing at its centre the fact that immigrants are men and women with their rights and dignity. For the Catholic Church, immigration must be guided by that Caritas Christi which is in the title of the document of the Pontifical Council for Migration and Tourism whose anniversary we celebrate today. Reflecting the charity of Christ means that we

> build a global culture marked by a genuine and caring encounter with the other.[52]

He continued byendorsing the view that churches have a special role in welcoming and integrating immigrants and recognizing that immigrants have a right to be able to worship in their own traditions. He referred to the contribution of the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy:

> Those of us who have memories of the wave of Irish emigration to Britain in the 1950s will know just how much those emigrants were supported by the presence of Irish chaplaincies and centres in Britain, which offered them pastoral support and the warmth of a home from home. Many of the more vulnerable immigrants to Ireland today—especially men who are separated from their families—need that same kind of support, especially if their language skills in English are limited.At a Church-sponsored conference like this, I feel that I can particularly stress the challenge of the pastoral care and the on-going faith formation of immigrant Catholic communities. Immigrants, when they are far from home, can very quickly—also because of the complex and long hours they work and the different religious culture—lose contact with their religious roots. This is a special responsibility of the Church of the receiving country, but requires contact with the authorities of the sending Church and the help of specialised emigrant chaplaincies, which are not just social welfare agencies but part of the Gospel outreach of the Church.[53]

The Catholic Church's humane and principled attitude to migration over decades, even as long ago as the nineteenth century, is the foundation on which the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy in Britain was built. The Church's ongoing consideration of the issue and its embracing of the ever-changing and extending challenges facedby migrants and by countries dealing with migrants provides the support for and endorsement of the work of the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy as it has adapted and extended its reach since its inception in 1957. Our understanding of this support and influence enriches our admiration

for and conception of the men and women who put the principles into practice.

NOTES

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3

Origins of the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy

In his history of the first twenty-five years of the Irish Chaplaincy, Kieran O'Shea states that between 1951 and 1961 '… the floodgates were opened.'[1] Four out of five Irish people born in the 1930s emigrated in the 1950s. They were mostly young and single, and eighty percent had left school before the age of fifteen.[2] In stark contrast to the poverty of 1950s Ireland, Britain offered the attraction of the post-war boom, and Beveridge's welfare model led to the building of houses, motorways, power stations, and hospitals with a parallel demand for labourers, nurses and domestic personnel. With increased industrialization and commercialization there was significant growth in the demand for factory and hotel and catering workers.

With this stream of Irish emigrants to Britain, which had turned into a flood by the 1950s, concern about the welfare of the Irish population grew steadily. The Catholic Church was at the centre of this concern which led, ultimately, to the establishment of the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy in 1957. However, prior to the formal establishment of the Chaplaincy, there was a huge amount of work being carried out by the Church to support emigrants spiritually and in practical terms, and the initiatives and care provided up to 1957 were the true starting point of the Chaplaincy's work.This chapter charts the origins of the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy Scheme which was established in 1957. An initiative of John Charles McQuaid,Archbishop of Dublin, it emerged

from a growing concern with the plight of Irish emigrants to Britain. The initiative was met with enthusiasm by the Hierarchy of England and Wales. From the beginning, co-operation with the Legion of Mary was an important feature of the care and support networks which were formalized as the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy in 1957.

A1938 reportby the Crusade of Rescue (established in Westminster in 1859 to protect the faith of Catholic children and families) epitomizes this social concern; itrecordedthree hundred and sixty-five applicants from Irish unmarried mothers, eighty of whom had become pregnant following intercourse in Ireland.[3] A year later, in a letter to de Valera, Cardinal Hinsley, Archbishop of Westminster, expressed concern at the approximately one hundred girls a year who were pregnant: 'the majority of Irish who come to London, come to Westminster,the Archdiocese of Southwark. Others become pregnant after arriving.'[4] In Westminster, there were three homes for mothers and babies, two run by nuns and one by lay women. From August 1940, the Catholic Protection and Rescue Society took responsibility for the repatriation of girls. It was set up to deal with children of unmarried mothers, or those whose faith was perceived to be in danger. A nursery and adoption society was established in Cork for the babies of girls who were repatriated.

Meanwhile,the Church's focus was also on men working in camps in England and Wales. A letter from Fr McDowell, Bury St Edmunds,in 1939, describes a work camp with one hundred Limerick men, eighty Dublin men and forty-five fromConnemara, '…and strange to relate, each of these groups calls for a totally different manner of approach and treatment in most manners.'[5] There were nine huts to which men demanded they be designated by county.The shift system was proving to be problematic as there were three eight-hour shifts which meant that those coming and going were disturbing others. There were two Sunday masses: 5.15 am for those starting work at 6.20 am and another at 7.45 am for the other two shifts. There was also Sunday evening rosary and a sermon or lecture. Mass during the week was at 8.40 am. Fr McDowell reported:

On going around the huts in the beginning, I was very edified to find at all hours of the day, men on their knees at their morning or

night prayers, according to the particular shift they were on…I also found certain huts saying the Holy Rosary as a body each night—a custom never omitted by the Galway men…I blessed all the huts one evening, with the men in them and hung a sacred heart picture over each door. Practically every man there already had a holy picture over his own bed…The men are exceptionally good at sending their last penny home and so far I have had no complaints of anyone failing in that duty. I do of course see the letters from Ireland, expecting, or demanding, three times the amount of money any men working here could possibly send, but then they seem to think they are getting three times their actual salary.[6]

Catholic Social Welfare Bureau

In 1942, the Catholic Social Welfare Bureau was set up in Dublin by Archbishop John Charles McQuaid to help emigrants before they left Ireland. Its focus was on advice regarding employment, accommodation and religious practice. The Catholic Social Welfare Bureau was disbanded in 1982, but the emigrant section continued as the Emigrant Welfare Bureau until 1987 when it moved to Cathedral Street and became Emigrant Advice. The Catholic Social Welfare Bureau was affiliated to the International Catholic Migration Commission, Geneva as the Irish National Agency for Catholic Migration. Before leaving home, emigrants were advised to visit their parish priest who would put them in contact with the parish priest at their destination point.The Bureau was established in recognition by the bishops of the need for contact between the place of departure and arrival. Under the auspices of the Archbishop of Dublin, but catering for all dioceses,a public office for emigrant work was open from 10 am to 10 pm. Most of its work was done through correspondence.It had a full-time priest director and a small staff but most of the work was completed bysix presidia of the Legion of Mary, with 125 members. Additionally,there was a hostel for women and girls in Dublin at the Mercy Convent, Herbert Street.The Bureau focused on bringing new emigrants to the notice of clergy in Great Britain and dealt with ‘enquiries in regard to the material, moral

or spiritual welfare of those who have migrated, at the request of their home priests, or relatives and actively rectifying any difficulties discovered.'[7] An important initiative was the Port Scheme, whereby teams of Legionnaires interviewed emigrants at Dun Laoghaire and Dublin ports and on the boat trains, advising them on how best to safeguard their religion. When individuals were perceived as suitable, they were encouraged to participate in the lay apostolate. They would enter the boat with passengers and disembark before it sailed. They wore armbands bearing the name of the Catholic Welfare Bureau. There was a similar scheme in Rosslare, run by Legionnaires under the parish priest. They were concerned with advising young emigrants on facilities for the practice of religion and accessing employment and accommodation and integration into the Catholic life of the host country. The Irish branch of the International Catholic Girls Society became involved with female emigrants.[8]

In a letter dated 20 December 1943, Mr P van Der Heijden (Ipswich) to Archbishop McQuaid, refers to camps and hostels for Southern Irish labourers and how he was very pleased with the Irish labourers, that they were good workers and their behaviour was excellent barring one or two alcohol related exceptions. He wrote:

> …the hostels and camps with their own Irish priest in charge are the best—one feels this is the most homely atmosphere and the men from Dublin, Galway and Cork are more united there…I am particularly pleased to inform your grace that the camp at Bury St Edmunds factory (one of the largest) under control of your Father McDonnell is doing very well. When one hears that about sixty men are regularly attending daily mass at the camp, one feels so very happy about it...I have called the attention of the higher authorities…do my utmost to make the Ministry of Labour see the value of having Catholic Irish priests nominated by them, as labour Chaplains to look after the spiritual welfare of all the imported Irish labourers. The Government here, in conjunction with the Irish, could arrange payment etc. And it would be necessary to nominate an older priest as Liaison officer between the Irish and English.[9]

In May 1948, seventy Irish priests from the three dioceses of London met in Westminster Cathedral Hall to discuss how to assist Irish emigrants. This led to a proposal by Fr Ambrose Woods from the Diocese of Southwark to establish an Irish Centre.[10] Fr LeonardShiel SJ travelled through Britain during 1948 and 1949. He visited oil refineries, steel works and camps for beet workers. He identified problems in relation to attending mass and practising religion.[11] With other priests, primarily fellow Jesuit, Fr Robert L. Stevenson, FrShiel decided that a mission for the Irish in Britain should be organized. Priests and bishops travelled to Britain to meet parishioners, as did university students as part of the layapostolate. Yet still, it was believedthat something more permanent was necessary and in September 1955, it was decided that, under the Bishop of Ferns, the mission effort to emigrants should be developed and coordinated. Fr Shiggins of the House of Missions in Enniscorthy was appointed to organise it.[12]

Legion of Mary

In 1954, Fr LeonardShiel drew attention to the continuing problem of Irish emigrants in England.[13] Hubert Duff, a member of the Legion of Mary was sent to England and Wales to investigate the issue and his weekly reports to Frank Duff were forwarded to Archbishop McQuaid. In January 1955, the Standing Committee of the Irish Hierarchy accepted two proposals from the Archbishop. These were that Fr Aedan McGrath, a Columban priest, be authorized to go to England and Wales to work with Irish emigrants through the Legion of Mary, secondly, that the provincials of religious orders whose personnel gave missions in Ireland, be asked to send those priests to give missions to the Irish in England. Furthermore, the Bishop of Ferns was asked to co-ordinate and develop the strategy to cover all centres and camps where there were settlements for Irish men and women. At the time, the Archbishop wrote to Cardinal Griffin: 'So far we have not reached out to our own people, I believe, with the zeal that would have to some extent prevented very many from becoming a heart-ache to the Bishops and priests of England and Wales.'[14]

In 1954, Fr Timothy Connolly, Superior General of the Missionary Society of St Columbans, was asked to release Aedan McGrath for full time work with emigrants. Fr McGrath was charged with developing the lay apostolate, the Legion of Mary and its auxiliary Patrician movementas he had experience, having organized the Legion in China at the request of Archbishop Riberi. As a result, he had been imprisoned for two years and nine months and then expelled. He went to England in March and was joined in September by Frs Casey and Ronan who had also been imprisoned in China.[15]

It was clear that the aim was to integrate the Irish into existing Catholic communities in England and Wales. They worked through the Bishops in England and the *Senatus* of the Legion there. In addition to giving talks at Sunday masses (and they were booked out months in advance), they gave talks to groups including Pioneers, Irish County Associations, GAA clubs, Nurses Guilds and Trade Union Groups. They held one-day conferences for priests on the lay apostolate. Initially,Fr McGrath stayed at the presbytery at Tollington Park but later moved to a flat in Holland Park and lived with Fr Patrick Ronan and Fr John Casey. A year later, Fr Ronan was replaced by Fr Patrick Reilly. They were instructed to integrate the Irish into the parish structure by engaging them in apostolic work, through involvement with the Legion of Mary and in particular the Patrician Movement. They travelled throughout England and Wales establishing new presidia of the Legion of Mary and strengthening those in existence. Fr McGrath and his colleagues had the support of Cardinal Griffin who issued a pastoral letter in 1955 in which he acknowledged the contribution to English Catholicism of Irish emigrants.[16] He also acknowledged the dangers facing the newly arrived.[17] In 1957, in a dictabeltto Fr Timothy Connolly, Fr Aedan McGrath explained that, 'on December 6,7,8 we were moving house...this is my fifth move, and I am thoroughly fed-up because it wastes so much precious time'.[18] He also expressed concern regarding communism and gave details of ongoing Patrician meetings.[19] He explained that Legionnaires walking around Hyde Park in the evenings had discovered a great number of Irish boys there and there was a concern about their involvement in prostitution.[20] By 1959, there were over 250 Patrician groups and the numbers were steadily

increasing;they were organized for particular groups e.g. nurses, camp workers.[21]

Missions

In 1955, under thedirection of Fr Shiggins of the House of Missions in Enniscorthy, missions were given to fifty-one parishesin Westminster, twenty-eight in Birmingham, six in Salford, three in Liverpool and three in Southwark and nine hundred and seventy-seven missions in camps. Missionscontinued in this vein with priests from the Fathers of the House of the Missions, Enniscorthy, Redemptorists, Jesuits, Passionates, Oblates, Franciscans, Capuchin, Dominican, Augustinian, Vincentian, Carmelite, Marists and Sacred Heart Fathers. Details of the practicalities of organizing missions are outlined in a document in John Charles McQuaid's archive: 'There should be good publicity in advance—handbills, posters, propaganda by members of parochial organisations, etc.'[22] A letter outlined the importance of regarding these missions as reaching out to the Parish rather than just the Irish.[23] It stated: 'The missionaries require physical fitness as well as generosity, each missionary visiting 600 homes which is viewed as more important than preaching'.[24] A leaflet as a souvenir was viewed as necessary; the mission should last three weeks, the first week for children; those in mixed marriages and those married in registry offices should receive special attention. There should be Sunday mass. The Legion was called on to help with stalls selling memorabilia. It was stated: 'The Irish flock to their own priests',[25] a sentiment reflected in an article entitled 'Roman Catholics Flocking to St. Peter's Church' on 16 March 1956 in the *Leamington, Warwick, Kenilworth District Morning News* which describes the enthusiasm surrounding the Irish Jesuit Mission conducted by Frs Leonard Shiel and Robert Stevenson:

> The church has been packed to overflowing and extra seats have had to be installed. About one thousand people make their way to the church for the 8 p.m. mission service and the interior is an impressive sight with men seated on the steps of the sanctuary

> and several hundred standing at the back of the church… also, groups of men and women can be seen any morning, waiting outside the church for the doors to open for the early morning mission service at 6.15. The men are mostly night workers who have come straight from the factories. The two Irish Jesuit fathers have travelled some 50,000 miles by car and motorcycle during the course of their campaign which has been attended by 281,000 people in almost all the counties in England.[26]

The Episcopal Committee for Emigrants

The Episcopal Committee for Emigrants was established in 1953, at the instigation of Archbishop McQuaid,designed as a liaison committee between the Hierarchies of Ireland and England and Wales. It included Archbishop Walsh of Tuam, Bishop Moynihan of Kerry, Bishop Staunton of Ferns and Bishop MacNeely of Raphoe.[27] In 1954, Cardinal Griffin gave financial support towards the purchase of two houses at Hornsey Lane Gardens in North London which were intended as hostel accommodation for girls. He also gave his support to the proposed Irish Centre at Camden Square and appointed Fr Thomas McNamara as resident chaplain and director. While the Irish Centre had links with the Irish emigrant chaplains, it was totally independent of it. It was primarily associated with the Oblate fathers as was the Irish Centre in Birmingham. Jackson described the development of special missions to building sites and hotels.[28] He reported:

> There has been a great deal of concern expressed by the Hierarchies of both England and Ireland in recent years over the problems of the Irish immigrants to Great Britain. The late Cardinal Griffin devoted his pastoral letter for Trinity Sunday, 1955, to the situation of the Irish in Britain. The Irish hierarchy has sent special missions to various areas where large numbers of Irish have settled, and loaned a number of its priests. The Irish Centre set up in 1957 in Camden Town provides new arrivals in London with lodgings, food and guidance for a period of about

> two weeks until they find work and lodgings for themselves. While this centre can cater only for a few of the immigrants it helps to relieve the parish priests of some of the burden of social services among the immigrants. Similar centres have been opened in Birmingham and Manchester. While these official and organised aspects of Catholic welfare make a considerable contribution the heaviest burden falls on the individual parish priest. It is here that the main problems of immigration are felt by the church and often they are not made easier by the fact that in a number of the parishes most affected the priest is not Irish and may find it hard to establish rapport with those immigrants who come to him for help let alone those who do not. A number of the new arrivals following the instruction of their priest at home may report to the priest after their arrival sometimes relying on him to find them work, food, lodging and often money. His inability in many cases to do this may, quite unjustly, lead to disillusionment. For others who do not report the priest can have little knowledge either of their presence in his parish or their problems. It is almost impossible for a priest of an urban parish to know the majority of his flock and often he can do little to check the drift away from religious practice which it is claimed occurs among large numbers of the Catholic Irish immigrants.[29]

From 1955, the Episcopal Committee met each year in Maynooth to facilitate the provincials of the orders and congregations meeting to coordinate the work of regulars and seculars for the welfare of emigrants.[30] Usually there was an attendance of seventy priests for the all-day meeting. In a pastoral letter from all the Irish Bishops on 10 July 1955,Pope Pius XII's *Prayer for Emigrants*was translated and circulated and the heads of families were requested to have it said each day at family prayer; teachers were asked to teach it to children and say it daily in schools.[31] The first Sunday of October was designated an annual day of special prayer to coincide withthe beginning of Missions to emigrants. The Catholic Truth Society published a handbook for emigrants.

Boat trains

One of the important roles of the Legion members was to meet Irish emigrants arriving on boat trains. This important work was captured in a Radharc documentary from the period. The presenter, Joe Dunne introduces a scene of Legion of Mary members meeting the mail trains in London's Euston Station at dawn.[32] Those they met from the train were 'mostly youngsters-unprepared'[33] and the Legion workers looked out for those who were quiet and looked lost or bewildered. The programme also showed Fr Jack Casey meeting trains and talking to young people who had come totally unprepared, with no jobs and no accommodation.[34] The Columbans recruited Legion members and organized a rota to meet the trains. They also had lists of accommodation to give to new arrivals. They tried to direct the young emigrants somewhere 'safer'. In Quex Road, there was accommodation for Catholic girls. The belief was that the wrong accommodation would lead to mixing with the wrong company and working in the wrong jobs. It was noted,'If they start badly, they'll do badly.'[35]

In a DVD entitled *Emigration to London*, Patrick Gallagher, speaking in October 1967 recalls:'Taking the mail boat from Dun Laoghaire... poets, writers, ballad singers all have placed this boat in our consciousness. It is part of our Irishness this movement of people.'[36] He elaborates: '…arrival demands an immediate process of orientation, finding your way around, the grind of looking for a job and somewhere to live.'[37] A dictabelt from Fr O' Reilly to Fr Connolly, covering the period August to November 1957,describes the enthusiasm of the Legion members who visited hotels, giving out Patrician notices, taking a census of hotel staff, visiting public houses, selling Catholic papers at Oxford Circus and Piccadilly Circus with a view to making contacts and contact work at Hyde Park Speakers' corner every Sunday.[38] It recounts the work of Legion members meeting trains at Euston mostly on Fridays and Saturdays, which involved getting up on time to be at the station at 6.30 am.

> Personally I think it is not the actual help that these Legionnaires are able to give that counts in this matter but the atmosphere they create around the station at this early hour of the morning

> when people are tired and lonely after leaving home and arriving in a strange land. Some have arrived over for the first time with absolutely no luggage whatsoever, feeling very downhearted and depressed. The faces of the little Irish boys and girls just light up with joy when they see either a Legionary or a Catholic Priest there on the station ready to lend a helping hand.[39]

In 1956, William Godfrey, then Archbishop of Liverpool and subsequently Archbishop of Westminster, wrote:

> The young Irish man or woman coming to England will find that on the whole, the English are decent, fair and steady. If they come with the idea of 'pagan England' they may be surprised to find that the non-Catholics they meet are such decent folk. Yet, on the other hand, it is true to say that as far as church-going is concerned these people are practically without religion.[40]

As word of the work of the Columbans became known back home, priests in Ireland sought their assistance regarding ex-parishioners about whom they were concerned. At the request of the Irish Bishops, Fr Connolly released Fr Ted McElroy who went to England in December 1956 to research the situation regarding hotel and construction workers. He estimated there were 150,000 Irish workers in construction.[41] He reported the resulting problems as loneliness and depression,drunkenness,bad company,irresponsibility and spiritual laxity.[42] He recommended a number of secular priests be released for a few years and for them tobe replaced when necessary;while the Columbans could provide the organizational requirements for such a venture, they could not provide the priests.[43] He drew attention to the many families living in trailers and caravans who were 'in dire spiritual need, invalid marriages, unbaptised children and no religious instruction'.[44] From the beginning he was clear that, while priests could live in existing presbyteries, they should be free from parochial duties.[45] In relation to the large number of Irish girls in the hotel and catering trades in the West End, their irregular working hours caused difficulty in accessing mass. The English Hierarchy approved the Camp and

Hotel Scheme in 1957. It was arranged that the hotel chaplains would stay in presbyteries in Westminster Diocese and would be free to work with the hotels and catering workers five days a week and help out in the parish on Sunday. Fr McEllroy identified a need for extra priests to live in towns with high concentrations of Irish workers; he asserted that they should be free of parochial duties so that they would have the flexibility, 'a floating population,'[46] to make contact with Irish in dance halls, GAA matches and other social events. These were provided with the consent of the Bishops of Nottingham, Northampton and Birmingham; six priests were allocated to Birmingham, two to Luton and one each to Slough and Nottingham.

The Camp Chaplain Scheme

During 1955 and 1956, missions were sent to various parts of Britain and the needfor permanent missions emerged. In 1956, Archbishop McQuaid met the superior of the Columban Fathers and Fr Edward McElroy. In December 1956, Fr McElroy and Fr John Casey visited some of the camps in Britain. They learned that while weekly mass was said in the camps,the need for pastoral care was not being met. Fr McElroy suggested that a priest should be located on a permanent basis at the camps and reported this suggestion to Archbishop McQuaid in January 1957.[47] This proposal was accepted by some of the construction companies. In the same month, Archbishop McQuaid proposed the idea to the Standing Committee of the Irish Hierarchy and The Camp Chaplain Scheme was inaugurated. Archbishop McQuaid wrote to Archbishop William Godfrey of Westminster that the proposed scheme should be directed by Fr McElroy, subject to the bishops of England and Wales. Frs McElroy and McGrath continued, throughout the spring, to visit camps. Fr McElroy's report of 9 January 1957 explains that they visited Crawley in Sussex.[48] Ultan Cowley, in his book on Irish labourers, describes this site as isolated and inhospitable,a place wherelife was tough; because of the camp's proximity to London, men tended to move on.[49] He describes how work continued there from 1950 until 1962 and there were 5,000 men employed there by 1952.[50] Fr Bernard Maguire was the first Chaplain appointed to the camp.

In a dictabeltto Fr Timothy Connolly in January 1957,Fr Aedan McGrath describes a visit to the Isle of Grain on 3 January with Frs McElroy and Curly. He states:'if there was a priest in the Isle of Grain who understood the Legion of Mary, there is no end to what he could do in the camp'.[51] He expressed an interest in increasing the sales of Catholic newspapers: 'The attraction of the *News of the World* and the other papers is so tremendous and the influence so bad that we cannot expect things to happen suddenly.'[52] In February 1957, Fr Patrick Smith, a Columban priest, was appointed to Stroud Parish where he had special responsibility for those on the construction site at the Isle of Grain.

At the June Hierarchy meeting in Maynooth, the bishops pledged nine priests to minister in England to the spiritual needs of two particular groups: Irish workers on large construction sites in remote areas and hotel and catering staff in the West End of London. The camps included:Spadeadam in Cumberland; Atomic Energy Station in Essex; BP Oil, Isle of Grain; High Marnham Power Station, Nottingham; Atomic Energy Station, Berkley, Gloucester; Atomic Energy Station, Somerset as well as at OvingtonSquare, visiting construction workers in London.[53] In 1957, Miss Helen McHugh bought 30, Ovington Square and donated it to the Columban Fathers. It became the Chaplaincy Headquarters in July 1958 when priests were appointed to parishes. Fr McElroy began to place the priests in July 1957. The first chaplain was Fr Domhnall Ó Scanaill (1957-1960, Dublin) who wassubsequently joined by Fr Paul Boland (1957-1960, Dublin), Fr Bernard Maguire (1957-1958, Clogher), Fr James Donnelly (1957-1960, Armagh), Fr FurseyKyrne (1957-1960, Meath), Fr Dudley Filan (1957-1960, Achonry), Fr Eamon Gaynor (1957-1959, Killaloe), Fr Jospeh Nolan (1957-1962, Kerry) and Fr Patrick Tuffy (1957-1959, Killala).[54] These, O' Shea describes as 'the pioneers of the Chaplaincy Scheme.'[55] With their full-time appointment, the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy was born.

NOTES

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2 Ibid., p.9.

3 Reportfrom the Crusade of Rescue (John Charles McQuaid archives, 1938).
4 Letter from Cardinal Hinsley to Eamonn de Valera (John Charles McQuaid archives, 25 May 1939).
5 Letter from Fr McDowell to John Charles McQuaid (John Charles McQuaid archives, 26 February1943).
6 Ibid.
7 Literature describing the Catholic Social Welfare Bureau (John Charles McQuaid archives).
8 Ibid.
9 Letter from Mr P van Der Heijden (Ipswich) to Archbishop McQuaid (John Charles McQuaid archives, 20 December 1943).
10 Correspondence from Fr Ambrose Woods to Archbishop McQuaid (John Charles McQuaid archives, 1948).
11 Report from Fr LeonardShiel(John CharlesMcQuaid Archive, 1949).
12 Letter from John Charles McQuaid to Bishop of Ferns (John Charles McQuaid archives, 1955).
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15 Document outlining the development of the Chaplaincy Scheme(John Charles McQuaid archives, 1955).
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17 Ibid.
18 Dictabelt to Fr Timothy Connolly from Fr Aedan McGrath, London (John Charles McQuaid archives, 10 January1957).
19 Ibid.
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38 Dictabelt from Fr O' Reilly to Fr Connolly (John Charles McQuaid archives, November 1957).
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40 W. Godfrey, 'The Irish Emigrant Apostle of the Faith in England', *Christus Rex,* X, 4 (October 1956), p.362.
41 Fr Ted McElroy's report on his visit to Britain 9 January 1957(John Charles McQuaid archives).
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44 Ibid.
45 Ibid.
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49 U. Cowley, *The Men Who Built Britain: A History of the Irish Navvy* (Dublin: The Wolfhound Press, 2001), p.167.
50 Ibid.
51 Dictabelt to Fr Timothy Connolly from Fr Aedan McGrath(John Charles McQuaid archives, January 1957).
52 Ibid.
53 Report on allocation of priests (John Charles McQuaid archives, 1957).
54 see O'Shea, *The Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy Scheme in Britain 1957-1982,* pp.20-21
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4

Ministering to Labourers and Hotel Workers

Camp Chaplaincy

Following the official formation of the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy, Catholic support schemes grew and developed both in Britain and Ireland. The greatest immediate impact came from the allocation of the nine priests who were sent to minister to the Irish labourers in camps across England. Their reports and observations speak for themselves.

Facilities varied from camp to camp. In four of the six camps food and accommodation were provided and church facilities varied from temporary to purpose-built churches. In each camp there were two masses on Sunday, one in the morning and one in the evening to facilitate workers. Sunday work was compulsory on alternate Sundays on the sites.

Fr Domhnall Ó Scanaill was appointed to Spadeadam in Carlisle. The Spadeadam Rocket Establishment, near Carlisle, was opened in the late 1950s as a test area for the British Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile (IRBM). It was located on the border betweenCumberland and Northumberland. There were 700 men working on the site, about 300 were Catholics and 130 lived on site.[1] Ó Scanaill's 1957 report describes how Sunday mass attendance was 106 and this included those who resided inside and those who resided outside the camp.[2]

A special 'mass bus' was laid on which waited for them when work finished. Mass was said in the cafeteria and fifteen attended for the Rosary each evening. By 1958, there were 1,100 workers in the camp, 450 of whom were Catholic.[3] A Church was built on the site, many of the men spending their holidays building it, and it was opened in 1958. ÓScanaillrelated, 'relations between the camp Chaplain and the Civil Authorities are excellent'.[4] Such was not the case for Fr Dudley Finan, attached to the camp at Berkley in Gloucestershire (one of the UK's first nuclear power stations); he had to live six miles away because the contractors were not too welcoming. Fr Eamon Gaynor was based at High Marnham, an electric power station. The power station was constructed between 1955 and 1962. Fr Patrick Tuffey was located at Hinckley Point camp, a nuclear power station in Somerset. Fr James Donnelly went to an atomic energy station, Bradwell, built on the edge of a former Second World War airfield, one and a half miles from the Essex coastline. In November 1957, there were 900 men working there, 600 of whom were Catholics and 300 of whom lived on the site.[5]

Oldbury Camp (a Radharc documentary from 1965) shows the work camp in a remote part of the west of England where Oldbury nuclear power station was being built. It was described as 'out of humanity's reach'.[6] Official policy was to locate power stations in remote areas. Oldbury was a small town that had grown up in the shadow of the power station. In 1965, 40,000 workers were building a nuclear power station.[7] Daily mass was said in a temporary wooden chapel, with Sunday mass taking over the camp cinema. Oldbury camp consisted of weatherproof, heated, wooden huts. There were two men per hut. Some men took lodgings thirty miles away while others lived in caravans. The camp was about six miles off the main road between Gloucester and Bristol. The men living in the camp, half of whom were Irish, went to town at weekends. Some,who had access to cars, went to Bristol during the week. Otherwise, it was a 'very dull place for a young man'.[8] One man described how: 'You are isolated, unless you can adapt to loneliness—a hell of a place.'[9] One man with three children aged one, two and three was living on a caravan site and planned to stay until the kids started school. He explained,'I don't fancy them going to school over here.'[10] Another man told ofhow he had left his family in Ireland

and went home for two weeks twice a year.[11] One labourer with six children described how he,'wouldn't have them over here at any cost', as Britain was not a suitable country to rear children 'from a religious point of view'.[12] He described the country as 'too materialistic' and lacking 'family unity'.[13] The documentary concluded that the men of Oldbury 'show little sign of settling down'.[14] They were described as nomads following the big contractors from one site to another.[15] Oldbury Camp was described as 'more like the entrance of a military camp than a building site'.[16] There were men from all over the world. One man from Leitrim, who had been there for six years, said he was there for the money and that he had 'wanderlust'.[17] He was a farmer's son, but the farm had been divided up, and when the local sugar company folded, he had to emigrate. He said that money was better in Britain but they worked harder, longer hours—an average of fifty, but sometimes as much as eighty-five, hours per week.[18] Sunday was double time which must have been a challenge for many of those coming from Catholic Ireland where the Sabbath was sacrosanct. Those who worked evenings were paid time and a quarter. Workers sent remittances home and saved some money too.

The foreman described the Irish as good workers who didn't miss days.[19] One worker who was interviewed said: 'I'd prefer the land. These jobs become monotonous.'[20] He described how it was different on the farm, but that the money received in Britain was well earned, involving hard work and long hours spent tunnelling and excavating.[21] Much of the work was at an experimental stage. The camp had a large and well-equipped canteen and workers received generous helpings of food. While the physical needs of the men appear to have been met, it remained a lonely, remote and isolated place. The film referred to how 'the men leave home and family to live a hermit-type life.'[22]

A chaplain since the beginning of the scheme, Fr Joe Hogan described how he celebrated mass in a little wooden chapel—and to accommodate greater numbers, in the camp cinema on Sunday.[23] He travelled to Bristol and Gloucester to minister to 'stray sheep'.[24] He recognized that many emigrants had been away from home for a long time, staying for short periods, not settling down. Many of them had no trade and no hope of going home. Fr Hogan referred to the

difficulties for families, saying that it was unnatural to have families broken up, especially on a permanent basis.[25] He suggested the most common difficulty was when the wife refused to emigrate.[26] His opinion was that this was not'playing the game' and that the husband could insist on his rights and demand his wife stay with him.[27] Fr Hogan's concern was that 'those who are married here are not often as good at religious practice as those married at home … and some have made an immoral alliance with a woman in Bristol'.[28] Fr Hogan said that young men in Ireland who were living in poverty and wished to lead a normal life were justified in emigrating, and he acknowledged that many men were there to accumulate capital with the goal of improving their lives in Ireland.[29]

There was a huge increase in motor traffic in Britain between 1950 and 1960 and this doubled in the decade which followed. The result was the motorway construction project which began with the M1in 1956. Fr McElroy and Fr Casey visited the sites along the London-Birmingham road project in 1958. Fifty-three miles of motorway were planned between St Albans and Rugby. The contract was won by John Laing and Son. The priests reported co-operation and enthusiasm for their ministrations from project managers.[30] The road was divided into four sections, each with its own labour force, headquarters and canteen. Accommodation was in hostels and transport to and from work was provided. The main headquarters was at Newport Pagnall and workers were expected to do a seven day week. The priests discussed the situation with the Vincentians at Dunstable who offered accommodation for a priest on sections one and two. In June 1958, Fr Joseph Nolan moved from London to Dunstable as chaplain to the M1 workers. Fr Patrick McPartland (Armagh) lived in Weedon, Northampton, with responsibility for sections three and four. Each priest had responsibility for thousands of men. Men lived in hostels and digs. Often mass was said in administrative huts. There was a high turnover of workers as, 'lack of home life, drab surroundings and poor food in some hostels and digs made life difficult for many men'.[31] Sections one to four were completed by 1960. The M6 motorway was started in 1968. Fr Timothy O'Brien lived in a camp hostel at Tebay until the road reached Carlisle in 1970. Fr Cyril Murphy, who had been the first Chaplain in Salford

in 1963, was the Director of the Chaplaincy at that time and now he travelled the country negotiating with construction companies and supporting Chaplains. He explained the importance of having a hall in the camp as it would provide a meeting place for the many men in the camps and they would drink less.[32] He said that the chaplains were 'all fairly happy and were well-treated'.[33] He explained that the chaplains from all over England and Wales would come to Ovington Road for 'R&R'.[34] This was echoed by Fr Murtagh who was a Chaplain in Luton. He talked as others did of the 'extraordinary hospitality of the Columbans who were 'very generous—always made us welcome… They had an open house, providing meals and accommodation. Fr Patrick Smith used to meet the team to offer support.'[35]

While both Hierarchies were supportive of the Irish in Britain, it would appear the Irish government was less so. In January 1957, Bishop James Stanton wrote to Archbishop McQuaid:

> I would be in favour of Fr Fitzsimons asking the government for a contribution, not only because it has been already asked and the Taoiseach may wonder why the request was not pursued, especially as it was put before the Minister in Birmingham but also because it would help to give the Government an interest in Irish centres which are needed in many other places. I agree of course that the best kind of centre is that which has been decided for Birmingham, by Your Grace and Fr Fitzsimons, but a government contribution, would not lessen ownership nor endanger voluntary working.[36]

Hotel Chaplaincy

In the same year that the nine priests were appointed to camps around England, Archbishop McQuaid acted on a July 1956 letter from Fr Patrick Reilly which identified theneed for Irish priests to work with the estimated 15,000 Irish working in hotels, cafes and clubs in the West End.[37] Dr Fuller, parish priest of Warwick Street, wrote to Archbishop McQuaid in July 1956 requesting a priest. He indicated

that at least fifty per cent of those working in the hotels and clubs were Irish Catholics.[38] In July 1957, Fr Paul Boland went to Warwick Street with the agreement of Archbishop Godfrey. A letter dated 18 June 1957 from McQuaid to Fr Fuller speaks of the appointment of Fr Paul Boland with only one concern:

> I have only one fear; that Father Boland will have too much zeal—in the sense that seeing all there is to be done, he will keep at work in his own good humoured but incessant manner. You will kindly watch over him for me. I'll know that with you as priest in charge Fr Boland will not be made, as other parish priests would make him, just an extra curate, instead of a hotel priest.[39]

In September 1957, Fr Fursey Kyne was appointed hotel chaplain in the Bayswater area. He was given free accommodation and food, but no salary, by the Oblates in return for saying one of their public weekday masses and helping out on Sundays. The area encompassed a large section of the hotel belt with almost one hundred smaller hotels. Chaplains were additionally assigned to the Piccadilly/Strand area and Euston/ Russell Square. O'Shea describes their task as 'a formidable one'.[40] Their work necessitated co-operation from hotel management. In the Cumberland Hotel, ninety per cent of the 2,700 employees were Irish of whom seventy per cent attended Sunday mass.[41] The managing director of the Lyons group, of hotels made two rooms available where chaplains could meet staff of the Cumberland Hotel, the Strand Palace and the Regent Palace. Other hotels followed suit.

A 1965 a Radharc documentary entitled 'Hotel Chaplains', featured Fr Joe Kennedy explaining how so many Irish people ended up working in the hotel industry.[42] London hotels were an important source of employment for Irish girls. While there was no doubt that the English priests were busy with Irish parishioners, it was also felt that there were cultural differences that prevented them reaching the Irish effectively. The Irish Chaplains provided an important service of visitation to digs and lodging houses. In the documentary, Britain is referred to as 'amoral', 'alien', 'pagan' and 'inconceivable to Irish young people—a

society which leaves God out of consideration…contrary to our own conception of how Irish mass is to be again everything.'[43] The risk of conformity was recognized, as was the tendency 'to go with the crowd, act as they act and no mass'.[44] At the time, the hotel industry was one of the largest industries in London. Eighty per cent of the 1,500 staff in the Imperial Group, one of the largest employers, came from Ireland.[45] They were recruited through advertisements in the Irish local press and by word of mouth. A contributor to 'Chaplains to the Hotels' praised the Irish workers for not abusing the employers' trust and for being 'extremely cheerful'.[46] She noted that the Irish personality was a tremendous asset, viewing the young women as very polite.[47] She suggested that Irish people in Britain were viewed suspiciously by some people.[48] One contributor to the documentary suggested, 'You have to keep your eye on them… here today, gone tomorrow.'[49] However,another stated that they were 'very conscientious, very good and very reliable'.[50] A staff supervisor in one of the Irish hotels said,'They don't change. They are the same as they would be at home.'[51] While they were viewed as good workers they were also viewed as having no idea of how to apply for or how to leave a job,how to apply for a better job or to compete with other people.[52] The commentator suggested they were 'not spruced up enough'.[53] It was said that, 'Irish people adapt fairly easily to the strange world of hotel work.'[54] There was concern about 'life in an often-pagan environment'.[55] One hotel owner, speaking of Irish girls, remarked on how they were very nice to begin with, but that this sometimes changed when they met other girls, started to stay out late and not get up for work.[56] She suggested,'Life can be insidious for young Irish in London.'[57] The hazards highlighted were cafés andespresso bars withtheir twenty-four hour opening where there was the possibility of meeting 'undesirable people,' and nightclubs, with 'dubious characters, drink available and other things'.[58] She indicated that even though some of them used to go to mass, 'it didn't make a difference in the long run'.[59]

The documentary shows Fr Jim Fingleton from Russell Square joining the young hotel workers at breakfast time. One young woman said,'We can talk to him freely and naturally'.[60] For one young man, however,priests in Britain did not seem as friendly as at home in Ireland

where there was the practice of the priest coming into the home. He spoke of how, 'Here, priests are different.'[61] Another woman said,'We stick together. We don't have English friends. We are different.'[62] This sense of familiarity and solidarity with other Irish people seems to have extended to the priests.Individualssaid of oneIrish chaplain that he 'speaks the same language'.[63] Fr Fingleton indicated that the problems of hotel life were associated with the life they saw around them.[64] He suggested that they got a 'false impression of how people live'.[65] Hotel work was an option only for those aged over eighteen, and the younger emigrants usually ended up in 'factories where conditions are not as good'.[66] One interviewee, an eighteen-year-old boy who had been in Britain since he was fifteen, noted how he had to 'watch himself'.[67] In relation to money, he said it had been a struggle to live when he was younger and could not earn as much, and he said that many had a problem of dropping religious practice.[68] He explained that his upbringing in Ireland had helped him stay straight, but that he found living on his own agony.[69] Priests expressed concern regarding a lapse in mass-going.[70] Fr Fingleton described how some of the young workers drifted from their faith, but that most of them, after perhaps five to six years, eventually 'find their feet and come back to their faith'.[71] He talked of how 'you can always enlist a nucleus of extremely good people in hotels to help others keep their faith'.[72]

Additionally, he commented on how most of the young women married Irish men from their own areas, and usuallyin a Catholic church.[73] O'Shea's history of the Chaplaincy's work lists the problems faced by chaplains in meeting staff due to their hours of work, changing work schedules and workers moving from hotel to hotel.[74] Chaplains to the hotels came from the Archdiocese of Dublin. A dictabelt from Fr O' Reilly to Fr Connolly covering the period August to November 1957 outlines their accomplishments. We hear how, 'Mrs Jackson who owns four hotels in the Bayswater area has proved to be of tremendous help to us in the hotel apostolate'.[75] She gave them a room in her hotel six evenings a week and put them in contact with the directors of other hotels.

In 2014, I interviewed Fr Teddy Collins, a Columban but formerly a Dublin Diocesan priest who was chaplain to the hotels between

1972 and 1979. He succeeded Fr Tim Hurley and was succeeded by Fr John Jones. He explained how Fr Eamon Cotter established the Grotto Club in the basement of 24, Golden Square, between Piccadilly Circus and Soho in the heart of London's West End.[76] It ran three nights a week: Wednesday, Friday and Saturday and on Sunday there was an AA meeting. It was for both men and women.Cotter, in his autobiography,*Awakening,* writes in considerable detail about his work as an emigrant chaplain.[77] Teddy Collinsexplained how he would enter hotels, through the staff entrance with no ID.[78] He referred to the tension following the explosion at Selfridges on 28 August 1975.[79] Seven people were injured when a bomb exploded in Oxford Street. A telephone warning was issued to The Sunnewspaper five minutes before the explosion. 'As an Irish person I felt I had to apologize for bombs,' he said.[80] He recalled how all members of staff in Clarence House, the home of the Queen Mother, were Irish.[81] Fr Collins lived in the parish house with Fr Frank David, theparish priest.He was delighted to be sent to London from Wicklow Technical College as he had worked in London during the summers when he was a student at Clonliffe College. Cardinal Basil Hume visited Golden Square and was supportive and personable. Fr Cotter described how, 'I wore my shoe leather out.'[82] He explained how he accompanied a priest from the west of Ireland to the Galtymorein Cricklewoodand a dance hall in Holloway Road and Irish was spoken at dance halls.[83]

An article in *The Irish Press* in 1978, entitled 'Dinner at the Ritz –but it's always in the staff canteen', outlinedhow Fr Collins covered 'most of London's plush hotels' while Fr Gerry French had responsibility for the smaller hotels in Paddington, Bayswater and Holborn.[84] At the same time, Fr Charles Sweeney was working in Kensington. The journalist, McEnteequoted Fr Collins saying, 'whatever their needs, I try to help them, everything from signing a mass card to helping with a mixed marriage or looking for accommodation'.[85] He described his *modusoperandi*: 'I don't go around with Rosary beads in my hand. I visit them at their place of work; have a chat over lunch in the staff canteen. I also visit them in the hostel where they live. Very few hotel workers now live-in; the management have let the old staff rooms at a very advantageous rent.'[86] He recalled how, in the mid-1950s, fifty

percent of the hotel staff in London were Irish but were being replaced by cheaper workers from the Philippines.[87] At that time, in 1978, he calculated that about 300 Irish people worked there.[88] Heremarked on how the majority of hotel workers were women who emigrated in the mid-1950s, poignantly describing how, 'quite a lot are isolated and lonely and we have a small social club, just a little place, here in the presbytery'.[89] He remarked that the Irish are now more skilled, but students still seek summer work in London hotels and went on to explain that most of the Irish in London hotels were then in the personnel and management positions as well as being housekeepers and chefs; four of the top hotels had Irish-born managers.[90] Sadly, he referred to the fact that most hotels at that time were part of large international groups and the result of this was that, 'the faithful old staff who, in a previous era might have been allowed to finish their days in the business they had served all their lives, now have to make alternative arrangements'.[91] He explained: 'One hotel rang me recently and asked if I could have a chat with a seventy-six-year-old kitchen porter from Cork who still got up at five every morning to light the kitchen fires. They were afraid he would fall and hurt himself.'[92] The porter had been promised a home for life by the previous owners, but now things were changing. 'I wanted to drive him out to see a home for retired workers provided by the Hotel and Catering Benevolent Association. He told me he was far too busy to go driving around the countryside.'[93]

In 1977, Fr Collins, in an article entitled 'The waiter, the porter and the upstairs maid' in *Catholic Life,* suggested that the biggest problem chaplains faced was 'the sheer weight of numbers' visiting a total of ninety-six hotels, clubs and hostels.[94] Fr Collins's base was the Parish of Our Lady of the Assumption in Warwick Street, just behind Regent Street. The area included eighty-two pubs and sixteen of London's largest clubs. The Legion of Mary visited the cafes. Fr Collins stated, 'we would need a whole team of chaplains to deal with each of the different types of work in the catering trade…We can't possibly get around to everyone. When you consider that some hotels employ from 1,500 to 3,000 people you get some idea of the enormity of the task.'[95] He referred to union membership as an issue in some hotels and as

a matter of justice.[96] Fr Collins said three masses on Sunday, at 4 pm, 5 pm and 6 pm to accommodate the hotels workers. He celebrated weddings but there was no school, hence no First Holy Communion.

The Grotto Club attracted a lot of Irish working in Aer Lingus, the Embassy and the consulate. The club had a bar, for which Fr Collins, a pioneer, regularly 'bought the booze'.[97] Regular activities included annual visits to diverse places including Rome, Fatima and Lourdes. Other social occasions included cruises on the Thames, discos on Saturday nights and darts on Wednesdayswith the chaplains often driving people home afterwards. They would also respond to calls to meet people from the boat train and visit women in mother and baby homes.

Fr Murphy described the very cost-effective pilgrimages to Lourdes organized for the hotel workers.[98] The Irish group would fly over on a Saturday morning. They did not have hotel rooms as their vigil was an all-night one. However, they would have an arrangement with a hotel to use facilities and have meals and store pilgrims' bags. They would attend two masses, one at the Shrine,before returning to London.

Fr Murphy recalled the energy and enthusiasm of Fr Michael Cleary who was Chaplain to the hotels in the late 1960s.[99] Archival material shows a newspaper photograph of him on stage in 1967 in a London club where Chaplains would go in the evenings to make contact with Irish emigrants. A letter from Dr John Charles McQuaid to Cardinal Heenan, when Fr Cleary finished his term, stated, 'the next man will not be a songster—neither a minstrel.'[100] His successor Fr Eamonn Cotter explained how he arrived in London as a quiet introvert and left several years later as a professional entertainer, stressing: 'London changed me.' [101]

Details of the daily routine of the Hotel chaplaincy indicate that it was a gruelling schedule. Fr Cleary's schedule was as follows: 6 am leave for Euston to meet train; 6.15 am take newly arrived emigrants to the Irish Centre in Camden if necessary where they can get breakfast and arrange accommodation; 8 am back to Lincoln's Inn for mass; 8.30 am breakfast; 9 am deal with letters; 10 am visit hotels to make contact with Irish workers; 1 pm lunch, followed by more hotel visit; 5.30 pm take instruction at Lincoln's Inn; 7 pm supper; 9 pm begin

tour of clubs and pubs.[102] It is not surprising that the chaplains often had to deal with the disapproval of parish priests who insisted that the presbytery be locked at 11 pm; one hotel chaplain replied, 'I'll be gone out by then.'[103] Chaplains explained to me that their work often involved late nights, as many Irish became talkative after a few drinks, and it was then they would choose to confide in and seek help from the chaplains.

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5

Reaching out around Britain

Area Parishes

Memorandum on Irish emigrants in England and Wales written in 1959 traces Irish emigration to England and Wales from 1800. It estimated that, at the time, there were 800,000 Irish-born Catholics in England and Wales, one thirteenth of the population.[1] While there were concentrations of Irish emigrants in the Dioceses of Westminster and Birmingham, they were scattered over a number of parishes. In all dioceses except Westminster there were a large number of incardinated priests, members of the clergy placed under the jurisdiction of a particular bishop or other ecclesiastical superior. It outlines that, in six Irish colleges, five of which were diocesan seminaries, 3,400 Irish priests were ordained for the service of dioceses in the US, Great Britain and the British Commonwealth between 1917 and 1958; 1,240 of these were for service in Britain.[2] Additionally, the families of Irish emigrants supplied nuns and priests. They served as part of the diocesan clergy.

Across Europe the parish was universally recognized as the basic structure of Catholicism. It was at the heart of Catholic life, being the lowest level of ecclesiastical organization, and the focal point for many of the devotional activities of the faithful in a district, as well as providing the physical location of the church, presbytery, often a

primary school and perhaps a meeting hall of some sort, depending on the number of parishioners and its financial resources.

Edward McElroy, in a letter to McQuaid from Ovington Road, dated 6 January 1957, reported:

> With regard to the building trade employees, we all now feel that the best way of getting and keeping in contact with them is at parish level—intensive visitation of Irish homes 'digs' etc by a few Irish priests strategically located in the predominantly Irish belt of the Archdiocese of Westminster… apart from the camps, if we are to expand our activities, the next obvious place to do so is in London itself. Unofficial estimates of the Irish population of London (born in Ireland) given by the Irish embassy recently showsthat there are perhaps more than 250,000 now working in London. Hotel and catering employees form the largest categories of those.[3]

Fr Joseph Nolan was based in Ovington Square and visited workers employed by Catholic building contractors in the London area. Sometime after, he realized that it would be more effective if Irish priests were appointed to parishes with a big Irish population.[4] Archbishop McQuaid, echoing this in 1958, and in agreement with Archbishop Godfrey, appointed five priests to 'Irish' parishes in Westminster: Fr Patrick O'Brien (Cork), Declan Crowley (Cork), Charles Travers (Elphin), Michael Ryan (Waterford) and John Harrington (Kerry) were appointed to Willesden, Highbury, Kentish Town, Upper Holloway and Euston.[5] There were some teething problems in relation to the turnover of Irish priests, ultimate responsibility and also, priests not being replaced; these were sorted out when a fixed-term appointment was agreed upon and, in 1966, it was agreed that a Director of the Chaplaincy Scheme would be the official liaison person for Irish emigrant chaplains, and that he would visit all the bishops and provincials in Ireland to ensure continuity of personnel, introduce newly appointed personnel and hold regular meetings of chaplains. Fr Joe Kennedy was the first Director, succeeded by Cyril Murphy who I interviewed in 2014. Fr Murphy recalled that there were

a lot of young priests at the time.[6] He singled out Fr Eamonn Casey as being very experienced and helpful, saying that they had many useful discussions.[7] Fr Kennedy had been frustrated as Director as he felt 'like a football' between the two Hierarchies.[8] Fr Cyril Murphy described his personal experience of the Chaplaincy as very positive.[9]

Outside Westminster, priests were appointed to other parishes. These included Birmingham, Manchester, Nottingham, Slough and Luton. They lived in parish houses and had weekend parochial duties but their principal task was pastoral care of the unattached Irish emigrant, with a view to integrating the individual into the parish structure. Writing in 1963, Jackson stated: 'The new influx of immigrants to Britain has made the church increasingly conscious of the limitations of its mission to the immigrants from Ireland, to the extent of lapsing which occurs among them and to the lack of priests and, in places, lack of churches and schools to serve their needs.'[10] Jackson described the prevalence of overcrowded churches in the areas where the Irish had settled and how it was necessary to introduce special masses to cater for 'the congregations which may overflow onto the streets.'[11]

Luton Chaplaincy

O'Shea describes the origins of the Luton chaplaincy.[12] In 1960, the number of Irish in Luton working in the Vauxhall plant was notable. Fr McElroy and Fr Joseph Nolan called onCanon George Dalby with a view to extending Fr Nolan's work to include care of emigrants in Luton,along withthe possibility of appointing a second priest to Castle Street Parish.[13] Fr Nolan had previously been with the workers on the M1 and he and Patrick Sheehan had started a mass centre which ran every Sunday in a school in Luton, on Dunstable Road. Fr McElroy, the liaison between the two Hierarchies, guided and directed the Luton priests and their role was to be available for and to make contact with the more than 25,000 Irish in Luton, many of whom wereworking in Vauxhall, Electrolux and Scafco.[14] The Canon bought a house for the priests at the other end of the parish and hired the assembly hall in the local school where mass was celebrated for the first time on 23 October 1960.[15] This was the beginning of the Holy Ghost, Beech Hill Parish;

it was led by some very hard-working and innovative, pioneering men and was to develop into a very significant suite of services for Irish people.[16]

Fr Liam Murtagh was sent to Luton in Spring 1962. Frs Joseph Nolan and Patrick Sheehan had been recalled to Kerry. When Fr Sheehan was recalled, Fr O'Shea joined Fr Murtagh who explained that they were there'on loan; from their parishes in Ireland and were under the direction of the Columbans'.[17] Fr O'Shea moved from Luton to Birmingham and that was the last involvement of the Kerry dioceses in Luton. From then on Holy Ghost parish was associated with the Dublin diocese while Castle Street was associated with Killaloe. Fr Murtagh described it as 'pioneering stuff'.[18] There had been an exodus from Ireland. He explained that the dance hall played an important role;often this was perceived as a problem given that,at the time, priests were expected to be athome by 11 pm, but the Irish chaplains were only getting into their stride at that time as most of these pioneering men found themselves in pubs until late with Irish who tended to become morose and more vocal after a few drinks; the chaplain would sometimes find himself accompanying the parishioner home for tea and a supportive chat.[19] Fr Murtagh explained the importance of their involvement with the GAA, a vital point of contact with Irish people.[20] They were very involved, playing as well as supporting, with matches every weekend.[21] The Legion was also very active at the time, supporting the work of the chaplains. Legion members would knock on every door and locate Catholics and inform the Chaplains of their whereabouts. Once the church was opened in 1965, there was apparently a period when a local diocesan priest took charge of the parish but this decision was later reversed.[22] Archival material shows that the parish priest was a difficult man.[23] Fr Murtagh, who had moved to Castle Street in 1965, returned in 1967 and was joined by Fr Tom Colreavy who was very welcome as he played Senior Inter-County football for Leitrim at a time when the Archbishop had forbidden it.[24] Speaking at Fr Colreavy's Golden Jubilee, Fr Ó Cochláin remarked: '…if the Archbishop hadn't stopped him and if the opposing team's best players hadn't stopped him he wasn't going to quit that easy and he didn't'.[25] Fr Colreavy explained that he arrived in Luton on Friday

evening, was head-hunted by the fourfootball clubs and on Sunday after mass, he played his first match.[26] Fr Colreavy served with Frs Comer, Fr Murtagh and Fr Hourigan.

Fr Comer started his chaplaincy ministry in Birmingham. He told me that his involvement in the GAA as a player was a great introduction.[27] He explained in detail the warm welcome the Irish chaplains received from the Irish in Luton, describing 'the support from Irish people who really looked after us, who invited us into their homes for dinner, for Christmas'.[28] He also enjoyed his involvement with the GAA and the local soccer team, Luton Town, which was nearby.

There were many Irish in other Luton parishes too. Fr Murtagh explained that the local diocesan priests 'made us welcome, they gave us all the facilities,' whichhe felt was very magnanimous as 'we were imposed on them'.[29] He recalled meeting with the other emigrant chaplains in Dublin every year at Easter. The Archdiocese of Dublin took responsibility for the Parish. Fr Murtagh said that Archbishop McQuaid was their 'prime supporter'.[30] When Fr Murtagh went to Luton he had less than two years' experience;he was young and full of enthusiasm and found the work exciting.[31] This lack of experience of many of the priestswho were sent to Britain was an area of concernthat was to emerge as an issue throughout the formative years of the Chaplaincy. A letter from Fr Joe Kennedy to Fr MacMahon, Archbishop's House,highlighted concerns dated 16 June 1964 in relation to personnel requirements.[32] He expressed concern that some bishops in Ireland were sending newly ordained priests abroad as emigrant chaplains to gain valuable experience and that there was a quick turn over;at the same time, there was a concern that 'we are reduced to the absurd situation of the Emigrant Chaplain's Scheme being used to train newly-ordained priests for the home mission'.[33] One of the disadvantages he recognized was that, in the receiving parish,a priest may be directed by the parish priest to do parish work until 'he finds his feet' and consequently it is very difficult to move out of that role in the parish routine.[34]'If newly ordained priests come to England it would be better if they come as curates', he stated.[35] In a letter dated 25 May 1965, Fr Joe Kennedy stressed to Archbishop McQuaid the importance of having experienced priests (ordained three to four

years for the challenging work) claiming, 'the newly ordained lack the experience and the self-confidence'.[36]

A letter from Owen Sweeney shortly after he arrived at the London Irish Centre describes a meeting with Archbishop Heenan, who had invited all of the Irish priests for tea;hepledged to write to each of theparish priests under his jurisdiction,who had an Irish chaplain in his parish,outlining that these chaplains had been sent for specific work and were to be freed from parish work.[37] Owen Sweeney went on, 'I think we must proceed with prudence and patience…He assured us of his wholehearted cooperation in our work , and said we should not hesitate to call on him personally at any time to discuss confidentially any difficulties which we meet within our work which would infringe on our special assignment.'[38] This issue did not daunt Fr Gerry Tanham who was chaplain in Holy Ghost Parish, Luton, from 1974 to 1977. He recalled:

> I was sent to Luton in my twenties. I had only been ordained two and a half years, when Bishop Dermot Ryan asked me to go to Luton where I was a curate for two years and then I was made parish priest, (possibly the youngest in Europe) at the Holy Ghost Parish in Luton where I spent four years. Fr Michael Comer was parish priest with me for two years. We planned and developed a parish centre, raised money for it through holding dances, etc.[39]

At the time there were 20,000 people working in the Vauxhall factory. Fr Tanham explained the reverence held for the chaplains: 'When we would go into the factory, workers would stop and gather around us.'[40] They held masses in pubs as they were big and accessible, and targeted men in besdsits. There were more men than women,single men who had worked on motorways. The parish was very progressive, doing a lot of international parish work, and it had a parish council where only one officer position could be held by a representative of any particular nationality.[41] At the time, the Irish community was the biggest sector. There were many activities including four dances a week. Fr Tanham explained thatthe road where they were based has since become inner city.[42] The chaplains found they undertook 'a fair bit of social work' and 'welfare work' and the 'sociability was great.'[43]

In response to an identified need, the Chaplaincy in Luton established Hope House, a rehabilitation centre: 'we did research before we established it.[44] The parish became bigger and bigger. We did pastoral work and ran an old folks club. We had a pub in the parish centre which was "a money spinner"'.[45] He continued: 'It was well run, strictly run, and profit-making. I would have to go to court to get licence. It is still there'.[46]

Fr Tanham was in Luton during the turbulent 1970s when he and his colleagues received hate mail and threats to burn down the church. However, he explained how the English and Irish were well integrated and the Church condemned the violence.[47] Luton was a town with a lot of immigrants and a mixed working class community. Irish people, as a result of the PTA, were hassled by the local detective unit.[48] The Chaplaincy, with nuns from the next parish, offered marriage counselling and the nuns were very good on catechetics, instruction given particularly to children before baptism and confirmation.[49]

Housing was a major issue in Luton, like elsewhere in Britain at the time. CHAS (Catholic Housing Aid Society) had an office there. The chaplains interviewed agreed that Luton was a non-conformist town.[50] The workers, without a second-level education, had limited opportunities and were second-class citizens. Fr Joseph Coyne was twenty- nine when he was sent to Luton. He described his time living in Hope House for a year and talked with affectionof the troubled men who had lived there and the challenges they presented.[51] He was very impressed by the warmth of parishioners and their enthusiasm for volunteering and taking on important tasks in the parish. He was involved in establishing a Justice and Peace group and a Couples Group and St Vincent de Paul. He described the time he spent in Luton as 'inspirational'.[52] He recognized the important role of Irish emigrant chaplains in other parishes in Luton, particularly Castle Street parish.[53] Fr Coyne acknowledged the importance of CastleStreetparish and the work of the Killaloe priests.[54] Fr Joseph Hourigan served in Castle Street from 1968 to 1972. He described his time there as 'a wonderful, very important time. In my experience it was a unique experience. I got much more out of it than I gave. It was the highlight of my fifty years'.[55] He recounted the sorrow associated with accompanying Irish

girls to mother and baby homes, and stressed that the chaplain at that time was very much 'a rescue person'.[56] He explained it was a vibrant time as a result of Vatican II, everything was changing within the Church'.[57] Brendan Moloney succeeded him in 1972. Fr John Daly was the last Chaplain in Luton.

Huddersfield: a Gaeltacht Chaplaincy

'The largest annual spiritual retreat conducted in the Irish language is given at St Patrick's Church in Huddersfield.'[58]

Huddersfield is an industrial town in West Yorkshire, in the north of England, halfway between Leeds and Manchester and10.3 miles (16.6 km) south of Bradford, the nearest city. Historically, Huddersfield was an important destination for emigrants from the west of Ireland.[59] An article in the *Huddersfield Daily Examiner* from St Patrick's Day charts the history of the Irish community in Huddersfield.[60] The Irish began to arrive in the 1830s and 1840s, attracted by opportunities to work in nearby coalmines. Huddersfield was a rapidly expandingarea due to the developing textile industry and increased economic activity as a result of the development of the canal system in and around Huddersfield and the availability of new machinery for spinning, carding and finishing which revolutionized the textile industry. Paul Shanahan, speaking on 'Séipliniugh na nImirceach' (The Emigrant Chaplaincy) explained: 'They would say that the finest cloth was made in Huddersfield—Learoyds's Mill down the Leeds Road. And they would say if you were dancing with a young woman in Huddersfield, in those days, that she could tell the quality of the cloth by touching it.'[61]

The population of Huddersfield grew by over thirty per cent in every decade between 1801 and 1851.[62] Irish emigrants began arriving and were willing to do some of the heavy manual labour. According to the University of Huddersfield's Irish Project, Irish emigrants in Huddersfield were first mentioned in 1832, and a church was built on New North Road in 1832 to encourage Irish workers to stay in the town. During the Famine, emigration gained momentum, mainly from Galway, Roscommon, Mayo, Sligo and Dublin. There were over 1,000 Irish born immigrants living in the Huddersfield area in 1851.[63]

Emigrants continued to arrive through the 1960s as Irish men and women emigrated. Irish immigration to Huddersfield slowed in the 1970s. Professor Jim McCauley on 'Séipliniugh na nImirceach'stated: 'Once you get into the 1970s, there is a problem. And the problem is the broader political context in which we are operating. Being Irish in England in the 1970s is problematic, with the conflict in the North, with the Birmingham bombings, with the IRA deciding to take the war to England.'[64] He explained: 'And the Irish community in Huddersfield—like many other Irish communities in Britain—kind of disappear off the radar. I mean it's much easier for me as an academic to find out what's happening to the Irish community in 1872 rather than 1972 because they just disappear off the radar.'[65] He continued: 'And it is only post-Belfast Agreement—it's only post- some sort of accord in Northern Ireland, that the Irish community in Huddersfield has begun to openly express themselves. So it is only in the last decade, for example, that there has been a St Patrick's Day parade in Huddersfield.'[66] The difficulties associated with being Irish in Britain during the Troubles were summed up by Tony Lambe, an interviewee on Séipliniughna nImirceach: 'The Birmingham bombings and things like that, those atrocities were horrendous. So you would nearly want to keep out of the way. Maybe not go to work at all. You know they were that horrible.'[67]

Emigration to Huddersfield came to a virtual halt in the 1980s. Professor Jim McCauley explains: 'You know there is still an established Irish group that came in the Fifties, but quite a lot of the people involved in the Irish club and the St Patrick's day parade, or in the GAA clubs or the hurling club now, are second and maybe even third generation Irish who are trying to reclaim some notion of being Irish.'[68]

Séipliniughna nImirceachfocused on the work of the Irish emigrant chaplaincy in Huddersfield. It explained that, for the Irish in Huddersfield, it was important to maintain their faith, language, culture and traditions.[69] Professor Jim McCauley stated: 'They try and form an identifiable grouping in the town. There are reports in the local paper of people speaking strange languages around town.'[70] SrAttractaHeneghanspoke of how 'From Connemara a lot of them went to Huddersfield and I was fortunate to be able to spend a few

years working there with them.There were a lot of people from Connemara there, LeitirMóir, LeitirMealláin, people from RosMuc.[71] As Paul Shanahan onSéipliniughna nImirceachstated: 'There were names like Flahertys and Furies and Connolly's and Conneelys—they were in abundance.'[72] He explained: 'I remember once walking up from town and they were putting down some cables—at that time they had to pull them and it was like a tug-of-war team. And the words they were using were Irish. They were saying "tar".'[73] As Kate, an Irish emigrant interviewed on Séipliniughna nImirceachexplained:

> I didn't have any English. I only had Irish because we didn't learn English where I came from, which is sad because when I left home I had trouble talking to people. And understanding them…. But I got a job in a hospital attending the Matron.That was my job, making breakfasts. They said I was a good worker, but sometimes when they told me to do something I wouldn't really understand. She told me to walk and not run here. I know now what that means, and at the time I said to myself I have to do that. .. I had never seen black people until I came here. I was frightened. There were no black people in Ireland back then—in Connemara anyway. They were as black as turf.[74]

The difference between life in the rural west of Ireland and the industrial north of England was stark. Paul Shanahan, speaking on SéipliniughnanImirceach, said:

> I came on the train from Liverpool to Bradford and I was gobsmacked by the dirtiness of it and the decay. But it was Victorian England and the best place to see it was along the railroad. Even coming across the Pennines, the walls were black, the sheep were dark and dirty—everything was dirty. That was my image of the place.[75]

Tony Lambe, who emigrated as a young boy, also commented on the grimness he encountered: 'My father came over for the work. And that's how we left quite lovely premises over in Dublin, and came here

to this filthy, black, mucky place. But there was money here—it was an industrial town. So there was plenty of work.'[76] In a similar vein,Bríd, an Irish emigrant, speaking in Irish stated: 'I never saw anywhere where the people were so rough together and where the people were on top of one another. And I thought to myself, I won't like this.'[77]

Irish men found work as navvies around the north of England, while both men and women worked in factories and some of the Irish women got into the textile industry. As Paul Shanahan explained: 'Most of the motors that we had in Ireland when I was young,they were made in places like Huddersfield. You had David Brown tractors, BRUP motors, you had ICI, all the fertiliser, everything that went out on the farms, and they were all made here in Huddersfield. And the textile industry of course was huge.'[78] Padraig, another emigrant, stated: 'I was working in the buildings at first. And then I went working in the cotton mills that were therebecause the pay was better and isn't that an important thing. And you were inside out of the rain and things like that.'[79]

In response to a perceived need, Irish-speaking priests from Connemara moved to Huddersfield to hear confessions, preach sermons, visit emigrants and undertake pastoral and sacramental work. Fr Jospeh Scott went there from 1956-1960, Fr Seán de Blaca from 1960 to 1962, Fr Martin Lang from 1962-1964 and Fr Seamus Cartúir from 1964- 1968.[80] Professor Jim McCauley commented of the Irish in Huddersfield:

> Undoubtedly one of their only support agencies was through the Catholic Church. Now that might not have been as developed as some of them would have liked. But it was certainly, the only social services that were open to them—as well as the British welfare state. But the role of the Catholic Church was very deeply established by that time.[81]

Kate, speaking in Irish commented: 'It was Father Lainge from Carraroe, wasn't it? He was good. And he was there for Connemara people. He was really good.'[82] Brídexplained: 'They were doing a lot of work really. They were great for the people who had nothing because they gave them some attention.'[83] Paul Shanahan recalled: 'They used

to have an Irish priest here, before I came, and while I was here, we had mass in Irish every Sunday morning up at the top end of this street in what was then the church hall.'[84]

SrGretta Cummins, a Mercy sister, was based at Brighouse in Huddersfield from 1993 to 2001. The Mercy Order had a house there. She and others praised the work of Sr Ambrose who was valued for her dedicated work in adoption.[85] SrGretta explained that she herself was sixty-three years of age when she started helping Sr Monica, a parish sister from Castletownbere.[86] She explained, 'there were Irish everywhere, mostly men from Connemara'.[87] A large amount of her time was spent visiting men in tenements and in nursing homes: 'I had a little car and would be on the road all day.'[88] She described her time there as: 'The best eight years of my life. I loved it. It was life-giving.'[89] She describedthe poor health experienced by many Irish women as a result of a lifetime of hard work. One of her commontasks was helping people to obtain passports, a difficult job,as sometimes those concerned did not have birth certificates. She explained the painful circumstances which had led to this situation for some people.[90] She talked about the many women who had difficult personal lives and one woman who described 'lying on a slab giving birth'[91] and years later, after searching for the child who had been adopted, the joy of finding the child. She poignantly described raising money and travelling to Lourdes with a woman who had had an extremely troubled life, as a last request before her death.[92] Gretta and the other sisters trained volunteers who she described as 'salt of the earth'.[93]

Sr Attracta Heneghan is a Presentation Sister from Roscommon. Although most of her life was spent in education in Connemara, she worked for four years as part of the Emigrant Chaplaincy Scheme with the Irish community in Huddersfield.[94] She described how:'I learnt so much in England that I was able to use here about the lives of people. I found that I was at home from the very start: the welcome and the joy that they had, and the culture and that, and the faith that they still had.'[95] Sr Attracta explained that, in 1999, she was working as a teacher in Connemara when a man rang her trying to get information on a relative in England. She started contacting emigrant offices. Later she took early retirement and on a career break talked to the

Provincial.Sr Attracta explained in interview, howit is 'important to focus outside, being in touch with people, meeting them and hearing their stories'.[96] She asserted: 'This is important with prayer, and one enriches the other.'[97] Sr Attracta described how, when she went to visit Huddersfield, initially for ten days in May 2000, four women arrived at the convent there with flowers and gifts for her from the people of Connemara. This was typical of the warmth she was to experience during her years in Yorkshire and the feeling of belonging she valued so much.[98] Equipped with a list of names and addresses in a little notebook she was given by Fr Martin Lang who had worked there in the 1960s, Sr Attracta moved to Huddersfield in August 2000 and started working immediately. She said that, she 'had the greatest time there; the meaning of belonging is what I learnt from it. I was trusted and welcomed. They took care of me. Hospitality was the great gift people had for each other.'[99] Sr Attracta explained that she loved the people of Connemara, having spent nineteen years working there, and she described what she met in Huddersfield: 'Real old Irish, neighbours to everyone, Christian living'.[100] Sr Attracta was joined a year later by Sr Catherine O' Connor. They stayed until 2005 when it was felt that the need for them haddiminished as the old community had dwindled with many dying and others eventually returninghome.[101]

When Sr Attracta first went to Huddersfield she would go to the market on Tuesdays and Thursdays and approach people she heard speaking Irish. They secured the use of a Methodist church, where they would have a meal for the elderly Irish, a cup of tea and a chat. Visiting the elderly in hospitals and nursing homes was a very important part of the work for those in Huddersfield, especially the elderly who needed company, support and advocates. There was important work to be done in organizing funerals in both Ireland and Yorkshire, and often this involved negotiations with families in Ireland who may not have had any contact with the Irish emigrant for over half a century. Srs Attracta and Gretta talked about how,despite the hardship of peoples' lives, they had great fun and plenty of laughs.[102] This was more than apparent when I met with SrsAttracta and Gretta in Galway in 2014 when both women cried from laughter as they recounted their years spent in Huddersfield.

Sr Attracta and her colleague, Sr Catherine,organized prayer groups and holidays home to Ireland. Sr Catherine still writes to people in Huddersfield and has a little fund for stamps, masses etc.[103] While the nuns were technically not part of the Chaplaincy,belongingto their own orders, they were very connected with it and would attend the Christmas dinner in Camden and link in with other activities and services, particularly in relation to prisoners.Sr Attracta summedit up as, 'a most enriching ministry'.[104]

On Séipliniughna nImirceach, speaking in Irish, Kate remarked:

> A girl I knew from home was working in Huddersfield and she said,"Why don't you come to Huddersfield, in England, with me? I'm working in a hospital in Huddersfield." And I hadn't been outside of Galway before that—never left Connemara—so I said I would go. I went home and told my mother that I was going to England the following day, and my mother didn't know where England was and I didn't know where England was.I thought it was in Galway or just beyond Galway because I hadn't heard much about England… I was full of freckles and long black hair—very Irish looking. She said to me, "mind yourself in Huddersfield", and I didn't have much money or clothes when I came over but she gave me a statue of the Blessed Virgin and she said,"Whatever happens to you, Kate, you'll have this." That was fortyyears ago and I was working in London, Nottingham, Huddersfield and I still have the statue. …..I always refer to it when I'm down in the dumps. That's my statue. They won't get that.[105]

This resonates with the words of Sr Attracta when she spoke in 2014 about her time in Huddersfield. She described how the emigrants she met there had held on to the faith and values they had been taught as children in the family home.[106] The importance of the faith, including saying the rosary, was something they carried with them from childhood. The faith, what they learned as children and what they promised their parents on how they would live, persisted'.[107] She talked of them possessing 'a dignity and a pride in themselves to be Irish' and of how there was 'dignity in the marrow of people'.[108]

Sr Attracta explained that the people she worked with were elderly, many alone, isolated, some living in very poor conditions.[109] They had emigrated after the Second World War. They had worked hard, leaving home at half past five in the morning and not returning until eleven o'clock at night: 'They probably had problems with the language;they didn't know anybody;they were young and what would you do yourself in that situation. What would I do, I asked myself, if I was in that situation?'[110] Sr Attracta explained that there were seven parishes and there were a lot of connections with the people in all the parishes and they all worked together: 'We brought people to funerals, or wherever they had to go, we arranged a lift for them. We came together, going visiting—visiting people who were sick or in nursing-homes or in places like that.'[111]

SrGretta recalled the very poor health of the elderly women and remarked, particularly, on their legs and varicose veins and cellulitis from years of hard work, many of them working early in the morning as cleaners.[112] For the men, there were similar challenges, asJoe onSéipliniughna nImirceachexplained: 'I was a foreman for thirty-fiveyears, out on the roads, laying those big cables out on the road. Oh, it was hard work and you had to get used to it. All sorts of weather—hail, rain and snow—you had to do it...They worked hard and lived hard'.[113] As Padraig explained: 'We were drinking. Who wasn't drinking? And at the weekend you'd meet up with your mates and if there was a dance somewhere you'd go to Leeds or to Manchester or somewhere like that.'[114]

Michael McKettrick on Séipliniughna nImirceachtalked of how, 'I got this bee in my bonnet that I was going to England for six months and was going to come home a millionaire and I was never going to travel again. But it worked the other way round. I didn't come home after six months. I still haven't gone home and I'm still here. Like I say, that's life—that's my life!'[115] Similarly, Paul Shanahan explained: 'Even though they were navvies, they were not stupid. They might have been, as we would define it, uneducated in the sense that they had left school at a very young age, but they were sharp and they were quick and quick-witted. And yes, they have done very well and many of them have been very successful.'[116] He explained how,'they stuck together

and they fought. They weren't nasty but they like the good fight.'[117] Sr Attracta was more positive: 'They worked bravely. They sent home the money. They didn't think about themselves. They were always concerned about their families at home and they would think about that, especially if things were not going well at home.'[118]

Interviews conducted in Birmingham and London, in 2007, support the belief that many Irish have grown old waiting for that day when they would return to Ireland.[119] These echo the voices of those captured in the Radharcdocumentary *Oldbury Camp* in 1965. Many felt unable to go home, yet unwilling to settle in a foreign country: 'You feel like a stranger amongst them.'[120] One man said, 'I'd love to settle down at home.'[121] Another indicated, 'Not if I got a 1,000 a week I wouldn't settle here…I save hard and live a hermit's life.'[122] Yet another said, 'I never think of the future.'[123]

Sr Attracta prioritized the lonely and the elderly Irish as the most important challenge in her work. These were people who had spent a lifetime working, only to find in their retirement a life of loneliness and isolation. One of the most important things she did for them was to arrange visits home. SrGretta recalled travelling with elderly individuals to the west of Ireland, the challenges and adventures on the way, the sensitivity and the trepidation with which she approached the situation.[124] Sr Attracta remembered particularly,'the first group which we took home to Connemara. Now, we were meeting people from all over the country, but I remember bringing one group from Connemara, and some of them hadn't been home in thirty years or so. The whole journey was wonderful, when people got to meet their own family.'[125] Kate on Séipliniughna nImirceachrecalled: 'She was really very good. And she took some of us to the seaside. She hired a bus for the Connemara people. She got money together and provided us with food.'[126] Many of the elderly hadn't been home in years. As Joe on Séipliniughna nImirceachrecalled: 'I think when the father and mother are dead athome, the whole place seemed to change, doesn't it? It doesn't seem like home. I mean I went home the last time, I have three sisters at home but all my brothers are dead now. The place is there but it's not the same place it used to be.'[127] Others had a different attitude, feeling strongly connected to Ireland. As Kate explained:

> Since I came over I never missed a year without going home in fortyyears. My mother died fiveyears ago. She was ninety-two. My father died around twentyyears ago and he was in his nineties. I never missed a year in those forty years, whether I was single or married, without going home to see my mother and father. And I go home every year to visit the grave.[128]

She emphasized: 'My heart is still in Leitirmore—the place I'm from. The place you're born and raised—it is in your brain. Yet if there were good jobs over there then, like there are now, I wouldn't have gone to England;I'd have stayed in Leitirmore.'[129]

Sr Attracta went on to comment:

> Well, the people who didn't come home, settled down in Huddersfield and they raised families and they did their best for them. They were well satisfied really. Most of them didn't really want to go home; they were lonely there, but not as lonely as they would be if they were at home. Some of them thought that people at home had no time to listen to them or to talk to them.[130]

Sr Attracta recalls: 'The people I had dealings with—the children of those people I suppose you would say—they were half English/ half Irish… They heard the stories of their mothers and fathers and the reason that they had to leave Ireland. But they didn't give out about that; they had a lot of love towards us.'[131] She explained: 'I also thought that they had great respect for people and for cultures from other countries. They were very good to them. There was no tension between them. They respected each other and they talked to each other.'[132]

Manchester

Early in 1963,BishopBeck of Salford requested a chaplain be made available to work with Irish immigrants in Manchester. Fr McElroy travelled there and discussed the issue with Irish priests and social workers.[133] Fr Cyril Murphy, was the first chaplain in Salford, arriving

at Easter 1963;he spent a year investigating the need for Irish chaplains in the city. Stationed at St Augustine's Parish, Grosvenor Square, he was charged with working with the floating population of newly arrived immigrants, rather than the settled, established Irish.[134] Cyril Murphy proved to be effective primarily because, even though there were many Irish priests in Manchester, they could not reach the casual workers or families viewed as having invalid marriages and unbaptized children.[135] He was replaced in May 1964 by Fr Sean McCartan who was moved from Sizewell camp in Suffolk as the number of Irish workers there diminished. Fr Murphy recognized a need for more chaplains, but because Bishop Beck who had invited the Emigrant Chaplaincy hadmoved to Liverpool to take up the role of Archbishop of Liverpool, this increase in staff never happened. The second annual report from Salford, written by Fr Sayers for the period 16 November 1965 to 15 November 1966, when he was living at St Peters Road, covering Eccles, Salford and Chetham, explains that he was completely free for immigrant work except for at weekends.[136] Visiting the boarding houses and flats, he made contact with189 new people, 98 men and 91 women during the year.[137] He visited 850 homes during his brief time there, helped by Legion members. He was a member of the Committee of St Brendan's Catholic Irish Centre and a member of a committee set up to commemorate 1916. On 1 February 1966, the Centre opened a welfare office, staffed by Frs Sayers andMcCartan. Most queries related to employment and accommodation. In May, he joined the Committee of CHAS and was also a member of its referral committee, since the clients were mostly Irish families. At the request of Bishop Holland, he joined the committee of Manchester Council for Community Relations. As a result of a talk he gave to the Union of Catholic Mothers, he recruited members who helped him with visiting problem families. He called them Family Counsellors. They dropped byonce a week, giving advice and practical help.[138] There was an Irish Centre at Peter Street in Manchester under the Manchester Irish Association, run by a group of Catholic men who ran a hostel for young women at Burnage Lane.[139] Interviews conducted in the Irish Centre in Manchester in 2007 and discussions with emigrant chaplains and evidence fromthe IECE archives, indicate that the need for emigrant

chaplains in Manchester was not viewed as crucial sincethe Irish were well established there at a parochial level and through the GAA and the Irish Centre along withother cultural organizations which had substantial local funding.[140]

It is clear that the Chaplaincy responded repeatedly and effectively to geographical need, sending priests out all over England to support the Irish who often struggled to make it their home. As the Chaplaincy became more embedded in the social framework surrounding migrants, however, individuals in the organization began to identify particular needs in areas such as housing and prisons. The Chaplaincy responded, adapting and growing to accommodate the people it was set up to serve.

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6

Influencing Housing Policy in Britain

By the beginning of the 1960s, the need for housing amongst Irish immigrants in Britain had become critical. Over a period of years and following on from an innovative support scheme in Slough, the Chaplaincy developedthe Catholic Housing Aid Society (CHAS), Shelter, theShelter Housing Aid Society (SHAC) and made a long-term contribution to British housing policy. One of the substantive areas in which the Irish Chaplaincy has had a far-reaching influence on social policy throughout Britain is in the area of housing provision and policy and this influence was pioneered by Eamonn Casey and continued by Paul Byrne, Frank Park and others.

In September 1960, Eamonn Casey was appointed chaplain to St Ethelbert's Parish in Slough, a large industrial town with over thirty factories, large council estates and a population of more than 100,000.[1] Of the 15,000 to 16,000 Catholics, about 12,000 were Irish.[2] Eamonn Casey was no stranger to emigrant issues. As he recalled in several interviews for this book in 2007 and 2008, while a priest in St John's Parish in Limerick, he was aware that four-fifths of the men in the parish had emigrated.[3] As a teacher of religious instruction in the Upper Technical School and in St Anne's Vocational School in Limerick, he knew that the students he was teaching would have to emigrate. He had made contact with the Irish emigrant chaplains who were already in Britain and he set up an Irish emigrant centre in

Limerick with another priest from his Diocese, Father Michael Neville. Fr Casey wrote to his emigrant parishioners from Limerick and he travelled to Britain twice a year to reach out to them.

In a Radharc documentary made of Eamonn Casey's work, he explained how, when he went to work in Britain as a chaplain: 'I moved around among them for months to find out what could be done to solve the difficulties of the Irish in Slough'.[4] He recalled how he made his initial contacts by meeting Irish people after Sunday mass.[5] He had responsibility for two confraternities in the parish, one for men and one for women, which met monthly. He explained how he hired a large community hall on Friday nights, where he held dances which he described as 'a most important contribution, because women did not go to the pub at that time and therefore there was no place for the sexes to meet'.[6] He also hired buses to take people to outlying villages after the dances finished at midnight.

Fr Casey soon recognized that Slough had a housing problem as acute as anywhere in the country. He found that a few young couples had, on the arrival of their first baby, been evicted from the single-room flat they had rented for £5 per week. A close examination of their problems, their pattern of employment, savings and future savings potential, disclosed that with a little financial assistance they could secure a mortgage and a house of their own. He spoke of the thousands of families in caravans who had given up hope and had 'staked out pathetic little gardens'.[7] He recognized that many had lost any hope of homes, families, having children, and reunification with their families. He also realized, however, that a house could be bought with a £200 deposit: 'This amount was the difference between appalling conditions and a "normal" life.'[8] He discovered that people had a difficulty, not with repayment, but with getting money for a deposit. Explaining the origins of the scheme, he laughed at his own enthusiasm and innocence: he had walked into a bank in Slough, and in forty minutes, standing at the counter, he convinced the bank manager to back his scheme.[9] 'I went into the bank where the church had its account and I asked to see the bank manager. I explained what many Irish parishioners were facing when trying to buy a house.'[10] He asked, if he were to lodge £1,000 (which he had received from

his own father) as security and wanted no interest, would the bank loan amounts of up to £400 to individuals who had already saved £400 for their deposit, up to a total of £5,000—which would help twelve couples.[11] He went on: 'When the first £1,000 was committed, I lodged another £1,000.'[12] He encouraged people to save systematically. He set up his own Parish Savings Scheme, a facility with a dedicated volunteer which stayed open late on Friday evenings to accommodate the return of men working outside Slough on the motorways and other building projects. They gave Eamonn Casey money, which he put in the bank. Once they had saved £50, eighty percent of it was put into a building society. This helped the individual to save with both bank and building society and establish a reputation as a saver with both. Fr Casey explained: 'All these guys would not get home until about nine on a Friday night. They were out working on the roads. I opened my own savings scheme and a volunteer attended it for fifteen years from 8 pm-12 am on a Friday night.'[13]

In the first year of Fr Casey's scheme, the bank advanced a total of £4,865 on the strength of the original £1,000 deposit.[14] Nineteen families were enabled to purchase their houses. Encouraged by these results, in July 1962, he made another £1,000 deposit provided by local fundraising efforts and another £1,000 given by a donor, in January 1963.[15] By the end of March 1963, forty-five families had purchased houses. There was not a single instance of a borrower defaulting on his agreed repayment to the bank. Casey believed that the housing problem could best be solved at local level.[16] His pamphlet, *Housing: A Parish Solution*, outlined the advantages of working through the bank:

- The working power of capital was multiplied.
- The bank provided the safeguard of professional knowledge and its known caution in not undertaking a risk greater than any £1,000 deposit would justify.
- The borrower's first obligation was to the bank and not to an individual or charitable body. From a psychological point of view this was of great importance.
- The bank did all the bookkeeping.[17]

The publication also outlined the importance of an advisory committee, which Fr Casey had put in place from the very beginning. It comprised a local estate agent, a mortgage broker and a local government official who provided expertize in a voluntary capacity. They gave advice on a range of issues including the suitability of houses and mortgage terms. Eamonn Casey explained:

> I started my second scheme when a man in his early forties, whose wife was expecting their second child and was living in unsuitable accommodation, approached me. He could not save a deposit to buy a house as he was paying £9 a week for his flat. I knew there were many families in a similar situation. I devised a scheme to give such families an opportunity to purchase their own home. This man had secure employment and I realized that what he needed was secure accommodation at a rent he could afford to be able to buy his own house.[18]

By this time Fr Casey had good standing with his bank and he was able to get a loan to purchase a four-storey house in a cul-de-sac of five large houses. With the support of Father Mossey and a loan from the Catholic Housing Aid Society (CHAS), he bought the house and divided it into eight flats. These were reserved for young married couples expecting their first child. The couples paid a weekly rent, part of which was lodged in an account in their name with a bank, so that they could raise enough to qualify for assistance in acquiring a deposit to buy their own home. He explained:

> I bought a house in Maidenhead. I'd be out there everyday and all those men who I helped came out to work with me. A local woman watched us working and one day she asked me what we were doing. When I told her she gave me the top flat in her house for five years. She gave it to me to use. I got a great start. I would charge them £4, of which rent was £2.50 and I'd give them back £1.50. By September 1963 there were twenty-sixsuch units.[19]

These services, initially established for the Irish, were available to all. He also set up an advisory scheme: 'I recognized the difficulty of many people who had the potential to solve their own housing problem but did not know how.'[20] He gave an example of a couple whose four children had been put into care because the couple had no lodgings and 'didn't know the machinery'.[21] He said he, 'had to educate people as to what they were capable of'.[22] He recognized their apprehension rather than fear. He saw how they were not used to banks and building societies: 'They had saved, but not in the proper way. They trusted the post office, were unsure about banks and didn't realize that in order to buy a home one needed to save with a building society and a bank to establish stability and saving capacity.'[23]

In relation to his third scheme, Eamonn Casey recalled how a young married couple from his own parish in Limerick had approached him.[24] The mother and father were living separately, each with one of their children, as they could not find accommodation which would accept two children. He knew the couple well so he knew he could trust them. With a loan from his own bank he helped them to purchase their house. He explained: 'I retained the upper storey for two and a half years and I fitted it out with its own kitchen and toilet. I rented that flat to a homeless family on the same terms as the previous scheme and once that family had purchased its own home I returned the upstairs flat to the first family.'[25] The homeless family was a Protestant family and Eamon Casey described this event as 'opening up a new most vital part of his work'.[26] He talked of how: 'This particular case was very important because word spread that non-Catholics in Slough could come to the Catholic priest for help. These were schemes I developed in Slough before Cardinal Heenan invited me to London to set up my schemes on a national basis.'[27]

Eamonn Casey was referred to as a 'business tycoon with a Roman collar',[28] and his work was acclaimed by government ministers, religious leaders, the press, radio and TV. In the Radharc documentary from the period, he said that the 'Charity of Christ must be filled in every era where it is most needed'.[29] In that period, he recognized that those trying to live up to Catholic principles were hindered most by their housing needs. He talked of:

> …the frustration, the unhappiness which it causes them, how difficult it makes it for them to live up to their Catholic principles is such that I consider that solving this problem for them is the most effective way of bringing Christ, the charity of Christ, close to them, getting them to feel the charity of Christ where it is most needed and [it] makes it much easier for them to live a full and Christian life.[30]

Molly Walsh, a co-worker at CHAS, described on the Radharc documentary how, 'all that warm and Christian compassion, that is Father Casey's special gift…he is an absolute ball of fire, and of course he combines the unusual qualities in that he is both eloquent and a good organizer'.[31]

Catholic Housing Aid Society (CHAS)

In 1963, Fr Casey moved to London as National Director of the Catholic Housing Aid Society. He worked with Maisie Ward, whose biographer, Dana Greene, wrote that 'the organisation grew dynamically in the early 1960s when Father Eamonn Casey, who had been working among Irish emigrants in Slough, became CHAS's director'.[32] His first task was to develop as many branches as possible in England, Scotland and Wales. He drew on the expertize of a committee of professional people who became the executive committee of the Catholic Housing Aid Society, with Maisie Ward as President. At the same time, he set up a major centre for the Greater London area at Cumberland Place and he developed the schemes for the homeless that he had pioneered in Slough. He processed 150 applications in the first year.The BBC made a documentary on his work. Its impact was immediate and it led to such schemes being adopted as statutory services for the homeless (Housing Advice Centres).[33] This is just one example of how the Chaplaincy Scheme influenced policy in Britain and was particularly influential in developing pioneering initiatives in housing policy and provision of services.

Eamonn Casey described Maisie Ward as a remarkable woman who, along with her friend Molly Walsh, had their own scheme, similar to his, helping people with the deposit to buy their own homes.[34] He recalled

how it was through Maisie that he had met Ted Wade who became a close friend and his voluntary secretary for all his time with national CHAS.[35] Wade gave him the use of his own office for three years. Casey stated: 'I would say that if anyone was responsible for the growth of the Catholic Housing Aid Society that spread throughout the country, next to myself, he was the most important person.'[36] Discussing the development of CHAS, Eamonn Casey recalled how, after Cardinal Heenan, the Archbishop of Westminster, had invited him to London to set up schemes similar to those he had developed in Slough, he held annual conferences in different parts of the country which led to the establishment of branches of CHAS all over England and 'that is what gave the unbelievable presence of CHAS all over England'.[37]

In 1964, new schemes were developed. There was a Fatherless Families Scheme for unsupported mothers, a Maisonette Scheme and an Out-of-London Scheme (which involved finding employment in areas where housing was cheaper).[38] In many areas, the Chaplaincy was central to the running of local branches of CHAS nationwide. In 1966, CHAS co-founded Shelter, which was established to raise awareness and fundraise for housing associations and housing aid centres.[39]

The work of the Chaplaincy, which resulted in the establishment of Shelter, has been recognized by academics.Seyd refers to the Abel-Smith and Townsend study on poverty from 1965 which pointed to the existence of a poor stratum of society and the subsequent plethora of pressure groups that endeavoured to represent that 'submerged' section of the population.[40] He refers to the foundation of such organizations as the Disablement Income Group, the Child Poverty Action Group and Shelter as marking 'the beginnings of a growth of new groups, both at national and local level, sceptical of the value of either the existing pressure groups or the political parties in recognising and meeting the needs of the poor.'[41] After a year of careful strategic planning, Shelter (The National Campaign for the Homeless) was launched, in November 1966, as a fundraising body for organizations involved in housing aid. Its objective was:

> To relieve hardship and distress amongst the homeless and among those in need who are living in adverse housing conditions…

> and to make moneys available to housing association and other bodies…whose aims being charitable are the relief of such hardship and distress.[42]

It has been well-documented that the launch of Shelter coincided with the showing of *Cathy Come Home* (a Ken Loach television adaptation of a play by Jeremy Sandford), which focused on the devastating effects of the British housing crisis on families. It awakened the British public's consciousness and initiated a huge financial response. Shelter was ready to respond.[43] Shelter was the idea of the Reverend Bruce Kenrick. He had come to England after a very successful career in voluntary work in the United States. He made contact with several organizations working in housing, including the Church of England Housing Association and the Baptist Organization, and with Eamonn Casey because of his involvement in CHAS and the Family Housing Association.[44] Reverend Kenrick raised issues around fundraising, suggesting that rather than having various housing organizations spending time collecting money, a special fundraising organization should be established. Bruce Kenrick was the first Chairman of Shelter and ran the organization for eighteen months until a professional organizer/director was employed.[45]

After a serious difference of opinion regarding employment policy, Bruce Kenrick resigned and Eamonn Casey was appointed Chairman of Shelter. Eamonn Casey was described as 'a powerful force even before the campaign was launched and later to become a popular chairman of the trustees for two years'.[46] The first Director of Shelter was Des Wilson whose background in public relations and journalism enabled him to maximize press and TV coverage very successfully. Eamonn Casey stated: 'It was Des Wilson who really made Shelter the unbelievable success it was … but without the Reverend Bruce Kenrick it would never have existed.'[47] Almost sixty years later, Shelter employs 1,000 staff nationwide, provides advice, advocacy and campaigns at national, regional and local level to make affordable housing available for all people. It has advice centres nationwide and a housing advice helpline.[48]

Shelter aimed to articulate the needs of the homeless and put pressure on government and local housing authorities to tackle the

severe national housing problem. The founding organizations were the Notting Hill Housing Trust, the Catholic Housing Aid Society, the National Federation of Housing Societies, Christian Action and the British Church Housing Trust. Shelter was launched in Birmingham in 1966 and by the beginning of 1967 it had raised £50,000.[49] In 1967, it created a 'slum room' at the Ideal Homes Exhibition. In the first Shelter report, covering its first fourteen months, published in January 1968, Eamonn Casey, as Chairperson, wrote: 'Our target was £270,000. In fact the campaign raised £373,041.'[50] He was also conscious of the cost of raising money:

> As important as raising money was the cost of raising it and its relation to the sum raised. We had anticipated a 30% cost, a normal ratio in the first year of a charity when so much time has to be given to making the name and the object of the charity known to the community. In fact, the team achieved a 19% ratio (4.63% for administrative overheads and 13.99% for fundraising expenses). It had allocated £220,827 to 24 housing associations; over 500 people were in their new homes by Christmas 1967, just over a year after the campaign was launched.[51]

In the 1968/1969 report, Eamonn Casey reported that Shelter had raised over £700,000.[52] *A Home of Your Own*, a booklet for school-leavers and other young people, was written by Eamonn Casey and a *Times* feature writer Adam Fergusson.[53] It proved 'to be something of a bestseller'.[54] In August 1969, it was announced that Eamonn Casey was to become Bishop of Kerry and he was replaced as Chairman of Shelter, but remained on as a trustee. Eamonn Casey summarized the work: 'We enjoyed every bit of it. I had a great life…hard work gets results.'[55]

Shelter raised funds to enable voluntary housing associations to do more to increase the amount of rented housing available to poorer families. Shelter grew from 70 branches in England and Wales in 1967 to 220 in 1969, and 450 in 1972.[56] In 1969, in *Face the Facts Campaign,* Shelter challenged the government's definition of homelessness, calling for it to be widened:

> Shelter's answer is determined by the fact that the home is the central part of the social fabric of our society, and not just bricks and mortar. Above all else, the home is the basis of family life. And the family is still regarded by an overwhelming majority as essential to the fabric of society.
>
> Any family is homeless if it is split up because the home is too small, or if it is living in housing conditions so unfit or overcrowded that it cannot lead a civilized family life. Inherent in this definition is the belief that where the effects of the home environment on the family are totally negative, they cancel out its existence… the home should meet two criteria: firstly, it should be a place where individuals and families can be themselves for better or for worse, and can obtain peace and security. Secondly, it should be an effective base for daily life, providing rest and relaxation and the mental and physical strength for participation in our highly pressurized and competitive society. Shelter believes any family is homeless if it is nagged by insecurity, or overcrowded so that it lives with constant strain and tension, or lacking any kind of privacy, or surrounded by dampness and infestation that spread disease, or living in physical danger because of the unfitness of the property, or cheated of the essential facilities that others take for granted.[57]

Shelter's success was unprecedented. In its first seven years it raised £5.5 million pounds, of which £2.25 million were channelled into housing associations and £5 million into housing aid centres and other 'rescue agencies'.[58] By 1970, it had helped in the rehousing of 3,500 families by giving assistance to fifty housing associations. Seyd describes how Shelter, initially concerned with raising money for housing associations, began to sponsor its own housing aid projects in 1968, as it became more disillusioned with existing structures.[59] Shelter Housing Aid Centre (SHAC) was established in both London and Edinburgh in 1969 and in Glasgow in 1971.[60] In two and a half years, SHAC in Edinburgh had provided housing for about 2,250 families. In sixteen months, the Glasgow branch had aided 1,500 families.[61]

The Irish Chaplaincy was a very important part of the success of SHAC. When Eamonn Casey became Bishop of Kerry in 1969 and left London, he made an arrangement with Shelter which led to the foundation of SHAC. Eamonn Casey explained in interviews for this book how he was not afraid to hand over control and that he knew he was passing over to: 'two great young men, extremely talented people, with safe hands who would give a new impetus to the housing work'.[62] These were Frs Paul Byrne and Frank Park, who Casey described as 'very enthusiastic, capable and bringing new energy'.[63] Paul Byrne, who had been Director of CHAS in Birmingham, became National Director of CHAS and Founder Director of SHAC. CHAS was employed as a consultant to SHAC in the early years: 'As well as providing the experience, the CHAS will contribute much of its ready-made machinery throughout the country, such as the Out-of-London Scheme'.[64] At the announcement of the foundation of SHAC at the CHAS conference in July 1969, Des Wilson said:

> CHAS are uniquely equipped to show the way, and we must create an opportunity for them to do so…at a time when far too many voluntary organisations go in for 'empire building' it is difficult to find expression for the admiration one feels for CHAS in being prepared to sink its own identity into this experiment. Shelter intends to see you are not let down…[65]

The report acknowledged that the concept of housing aid and advisory centres was pioneered by CHAS and states: 'the concept was devised by Father Eamonn Casey, now Bishop of Kerry and then Director of the Catholic Housing Aid Society'.[66] Fr Paul Byrne was the first director of SHAC, the Honorary Director of CHAS and a founder of the Family Housing Association in Birmingham. Des Wilson chaired the steering committee of SHAC which planned the operation over a twelve-month period, and a team of forty workers managed it in its initial stages. Fr Paul Byrne is quoted as saying: 'At the moment we are handling sixty-five families a week. But SHAC is bound to be bigger. We are gearing up for a very large operation and are waiting for the floodgates to open.'[67] The Shelter document acknowledges the important role of

Eamonn Casey: 'Housing aid centres, many of them spurred on by Father Casey, are now beginning to spring up, but none will be of the size of SHAC, or able to tackle as many problems as it.'[68] SHAC was estimated to cost about £80,000 a year to run and at least fifty percent of this would come from contributions from other organizations, including the Joseph Rowntree Memorial Trust and the Gulbenkian Foundation. The report quotes Eamonn Casey as suggesting that the importance of SHAC was in serving 'as a barometer of homelessness in the London area, indicating its size, its nature and the districts of greatest need'.[69] In 1970, the Greve Report on Homelessness in London commends the importance of independent advice centres like CHAS,[70] and in 1976, Paul Byrne was awarded an OBE for his work in housing. Lobbying by CHAS played a key role in the introduction of the 1977 Housing (Homeless Persons) Act, which for the first time, gave rights to housing to some homeless people, mostly families with children and single parents.[71] In 1989, the director of CHAS helped to set up the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Homelessness and Housing Need.[72] In 2003, CHAS and the Churches' National Housing Coalition (CNHC) merged to form Housing Justice.[73] In January 2006, Housing Justice expanded further when it merged with United London Ecumenical Action on Single Homelessness (UNLEASH).[74]

Of all the schemes set up through the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy, the housing assistance it provided directly and indirectly is, arguably, its most impressive achievement. Almost as impressive as the influence of the original, practical housing assistance is the way in which inspirational individuals within the Chaplaincy were allowed to shine. It is a mark of the organization's focus on its original compassionate mission to provide support to Irish migrants in Britain that the housing schemes, initiated under its auspices, flourished.

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7

Expansion and Consolidation

As the Chaplaincy expanded to support people not only in their working environments but also as they struggled to create secure and stable home lives, other schemes continued to develop. From the 1960s, there was an increasing focus on centre-based services for Irish migrants in Britain. Some of the most influential developments are described here but it is difficult to provide a comprehensive account of all the services and initiatives as there was so much overlap between the work of the Chaplaincy and independent elements of the centre-based services. Many of the Chaplaincy personnel were the back bone and catalysts behind the foundation of a large number ofservices and organizations. As Fr Gerry Kivlehan explained, 'almost all of today's welfare services had their origins in the Irish Chaplaincy'.[1] He explained how the chaplains were motivated by Gospel teaching: 'fundamentally they were concerned with social justice, helping Irish emigrants to find a room, a bed and so on'.[2] He went on to describe how, 'A lot of them were people who grew up in Ireland in the 1960s with a huge concern for humanity, people and justice' and he stressed that many of them were 'people of good vision'.[3] The presence and dedication of the Chaplaincy was clear when the Irish government failed to address the needs of their people abroad.

In 1971, the Irish Episcopal Conference established a commission to cater for the spiritual needs of Irish emigrants; it was to be known as

the Irish Episcopal Commission for Emigrants (IECE). The principal purposes of the IECE (now the Irish Emigrant Council) are: 'to express the concern and care of the Irish church for the spiritual and temporal needs of Irish people overseas in partnership with the local church; to develop and initiate services which will give practical expressions to these concerns; to research the ongoing needs of Irish emigrants and keep them before the Irish Church; to liaise with national and international bodies dealing with migrants and refugees.'[4] This commission consolidated the work in which the Chaplaincy had been involved for about a quarter of a century. The Chaplaincy and the IECE became increasingly involved in lobbying, advocacy and campaigning, and in education at local, national and international levels. This involved research and the development of literacy programmes, providing information at many levels through advice centres, schools and emigrant advice services and by informing politicians. In addition to housing, other initiatives in the 1960s and 1970s were also influential, for example, the development of an employment agency and later the introduction of a social work service.

The London Irish Centre

Fr Tom MacNamara spearheaded the establishment of the London Irish Centre which opened on 27 September 1955.[5] He was seconded from the Westminster Diocese to run the Centre. The Oblate Order (from nearby Quex Road) provided chaplains to the Centre from the mid-1960s. These were Frs Paddy Hackett, Paddy Sheridan and Claude Malone. Fr Malone served for three years initially and returned again several decades later.[6] The Centre was initially vested in the Irish community with four trustees: Lord Longford, Dr Lary Morton, Denis O'Riordan and Frank Caulfield.[7] The three patrons were the Archbishop of Westminster and the Bishops of Southwark and Brentwood.[8] The council of the Centre represented Irish community organizations, with an annually-elected administration committee. The Constitution of the council for the Irish Centre (as amended at the first AGM on 6 December 1961) indicates its purpose as establishing and maintaining an Irish Centre in London in order to aid and

benefit Irish workers recently arrived in Great Britain or working in Great Britain and therefore unable to reside at home; it was to achieve this by any of the following methods:'providing hostels with chapels, canteens, libraries, living rooms and residential accommodation in a Christian atmosphere for workers unable to find or afford suitable lodgings or home; setting up young workers in suitable employment and homes; assisting poor or homeless workers to find respectable lodgings; providing in any way for the spiritual and moral welfare of such workers as aforesaid; relieving poverty, sickness and distress; running a social club and providing amenities for social, recreation, and sport in a Christian atmosphere; raising funds for these projects by voluntary contributions, grants, legacies and functions; co-operating with other charities and social welfare bodies having common objects and interest'.[9]

The London Irish Centre underwent significant development under the directorship of Fr Bill Cagney (OMI) between 1975 and 1981. Fr Cagney was described as 'a man of action and he knocked down more walls and brought in more bulldozers than others might'.[10] Cagney had decided that the centre needed major development and launched a controversial fundraising programme of over £1 million. The Archbishop of Armagh, Dr Cardinal ÓFiaich, and the Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Hume, together laid the foundation stone for the new extension to the Irish Centre in Camden Square in November 1977. The occasion marked Cardinal Ó Fiaich's first visit to Britain after he became Archbishop of Armagh, and he stayed with Cardinal Hume. Both Cardinals commended the work of the Centre and made a strong appeal on its behalf for funds to complete work on the extension.[11] Dr Ó Fiaich expressed the hope that both the Irish government and the Northern Ireland administration would give financial assistance to the project in view of the fact that emigrants from both areas had been helped.[12] Aidan Hennigan reports Cardinal Ó Fiaich asking: 'Would it be too much to hope that, in this era when economic cooperation between the Irish government and the Northern administration is being promoted in so many fields, the Irish Centre, which caters for the needs of exiles from both areas, might be accepted North and South of the border as a deserving cause with a claim on the generosity of other

administrations?'[13] Cardinal Hume indicated: 'I bring my support and encouragement. I wish I could bring a cheque but the financial problems of the Archbishop of Westminster are very considerable. When we have solved our problems I hope there will be sufficient to make our contribution.'[14] Also in attendance at the celebration were the Irish Ambassador to Britain, Paul Keating (who read a message from Charles Haughey, Minister for Health and Social Welfare), MPs, civic dignitaries and leaders of the Irish community. In his message, Mr Haughey stated: 'I am keenly aware of the need for every effort to provide for the social and welfare needs of the underprivileged.'[15]

The Church was present where the State was notably absent, and it often turned to the private sector for support. On 7 June 1978, British Rail Sealink announced, at a press conference in the London Irish Centre, that it would help towards the cost of the Centre's re-development, setting aside 10p for every additional passenger carried by Sealink to the Republic of Ireland from 1978, 8p to be given to the Irish Centre and 2p to the Federation of Irish Societies.[16]

Journalist,Gery Lawless reported Fr Cagney announcing that a grant of £208,000 had been received from the British Housing Corporation for a hostel in Westminster to house 120 Irish girls, with an additional £580,000 towards building conversions.[17] However, he added:

> But not a penny from the Irish government… Recently I had to ask publicly what the Irish government has against the Irish here. Don't they realise that it was the billions sent back to Ireland by the Irish emigrants that allowed the new state to survive to its present affluence? I want to make an urgent appeal to the Irish government to reach a decision on this question. Even when the Westminster girls' hostel is finished half of those girls needing accommodation would have to be turned away. The time has come for the Irish government to stop the buck-passing and offer real help.[18]

This role in questioning the lack of commitment of the Irish government to the needs of Irish emigrants was a feature of the work of the Chaplaincy for half a century. In 1981, Father Cagney succeeded in

procuring £300,000 from the Irish government—the first time the Irish government had made a capital contribution to an establishment in Britain.[19] He acquired and developed Saint Louise's Hostel in Medway Street, which was run by Sr Anthony of the Daughters of Charity. It cost one million pounds, paid for with money received from the British Housing Corporation, and it was opened in 1981 by Cardinal Hume. Fr Cagney was also responsible for the development of Conway House, a hostel for young men at Quex Road. He was responsible for a thirty-four room extension. Again, the money came from the British Housing Corporation. Even though the Irish Centre held property worth two million pounds, it also had a £750,000 debt.[20] This was during a time of economic recession, when interest rates more than doubled and sources of private funding dried up. IECE archival material refers to how 'as a direct result of a grant from the Irish government, separate premises to 'house' welfare activities were opened, in May 1982'.[21] Fr Jim Butler completed a 1,000-mile cycle in 1983, which raised £80,000 sterling.[22] The importance of the social club was emphasized in 1984:

> From the first days of the centre when the groups of Irish people got together to organise the welfare work, which in those days meant the running of the two hostels and in general the forming of a social club was seen as a necessary and valuable thing to do. It would be a meeting place where Irish people would gather and relax and be able to support each other as well as pass on valuable information concerning accommodation and employment.[23]

The London Irish Centre welcomed a total of 1,785 new arrivals in 1984, representing the thirty-two counties of Ireland.[24] 1988 was a year of drastic changes in basic welfare legislation in Britain: 'the omens for the future are not bright'.[25] In the context of a new Local Government Finance Act and new housing legislation, 'the cost of rooms will increase without increase in housing benefit'.[26] Hostels were full to capacity throughout the year. Even with 133 places for girls in Victoria, 100 boys, young men and women in Kilburn and 20 elderly men in Kilburn, and a total of nearly 95,000 bed nights a year, there was still a need for more accommodation and negotiation on future

developments.[27] The aim was to open a new hostel for twenty elderly men in the Spring of 1989.[28] In May 1988, a day-care centre for the elderly was opened which provided a service for more than sixty-eight elderly in the Camden area. Thirty-five 'elderly and often lonely people have lunch, Monday to Friday, in genial company and surroundings.'[29] Undoubtedly, many of these men would have come into contact in earlier decades with the camp chaplains around Britain, when they may still have been planning to go home one day.

In 1988, the London Irish Centre received financial assistance from DION (Assistance for emigrants was administered under the DION fund. The name of the fund comes from the Irish word "díon"), Camden Council, Irish Festival London and the London Irish Society. It received between 10,000 phone calls and letters, conducted 5,000 interviews with clients, and saw 2,078 new ones.[30] Among them, despite reports of a brain drain and the exodus of Ireland's most educated, the London Irish Centre saw a large percentage of poorly educated emigrants:

> These are not the clients who can be easily handed a list and told they can phone around for accommodation and work. These are the clients who cannot read well enough to find an appropriate advertisement in a newspaper, who cannot find a street on a map despite the index being available, who cannot relate phone numbers to places in London even though we show them where to look. These are the people who need hours of time from staff in order to orientate them here in London and help them avoid the prevalent dangers and difficulties.[31]

On his retirement, Fr Cagney asked that the Centre's council should consider asking the Oblate Order to hand over the running of the centre to lay people.[32] The Oblate Order had been invited by Cardinal Heenan in 1967 to take over the Directorship of the Centre to bring it stability and to develop appropriate services. A documentary commissioned to mark the golden jubilee of the Centre,'50 years of the London Irish Centre',described the success of Fr Gerry Kivlehan and others in securing the constitutional, financial and business future of the Centre.[33] Fr Kivlehanexplained what it was like when he worked

in the London Irish Centre between 1993 and 2004.[34] He moved to London when bombings were still a part of life there. He described how, on the morning after the Canary Wharf bomb, he was approached by numerous newspapers, television channels and radio journalists to do interviews.[35] He did all of them,acknowledging what had happened yet placing responsibility firmly on the authorities to attempt to understand what had driven people to place those bombs. Fr Kivlehan argued that the fundamental issue of injustice and inequality had to be addressed. He indicated that the Irish Chaplaincy was the only organization to take a stand on those issues. He described the tremendous change he had witnessed in his ten years in London. He was the last Oblate involved in the London Irish Centre. He explained: 'it was always our intention to take services to where we would be redundant.'[36]

Fr Kivlehan, originally from Mayo, had worked in England since 1973. He worked in Liverpool for many years and as a student, he had worked in the Irish Centre in Birmingham alongside Fr John Mulvanney. He later returned to work in Birmingham and he experienced at first-hand the tension and suspicion associated with the Troubles. He explained that the early 1970s was not too long after Bloody Sunday.[37] He talked about the identity issues for chaplains as Catholics and as Irish. Would one integrate under the banner of Catholicism or very clearly as an Irish person?[38] He praised the dedication and foresight of Cardinal Heenan, and he described Cardinal Hume as 'a magnanimous person.'[39] The pastoral role and conflict roles were the same, 'motivated by a need to help Irish people'.[40] He praised his colleagues, among them Sr Theresa, Sr Rose, Eileen O Mahoney in Luton and Bridie Dowd who was awarded an OBE for her work with the homeless in London.[41]

Throughout the 1980s, the Irish Centre in Camden Square was a focal point for all things Irish in London as well as the provision of services and advice. In fact, this was the base of the Chaplaincy scheme, and as FrGearoidO Griofa explained in Séipliniugh na nImirceach, hewould spend most of his day here. Fr Gearoidstated:

> From about 10. 30 am to 5 pm I'd spend a lot of time there. People would come in looking for somewhere to stay. People

> would come in looking for work. Calls and letters would come from Ireland from people who were looking for their loved ones who had not been in touch, maybe. And each day was different, special and new.[42]

He recalled:

> I was a young priest, in those days of 1983. I was a chaplain in Camus in the lovely part of Connemara, in the parish of Rosmuc, and I got a call from the Bishop's house saying that he wanted to see me. And the result of that call was that I was in central London within a week, working with Irish immigrants.[43]

He was requested to provide spiritual and pastoral support for Irish emigrants in London. He explained how:

> I started saying a mass in Irish and we invited people from the Gaeltacht to come to mass and we'd have a cup of tea after mass. A lot of people came to that then. But perhaps some then came to have the cup of tea because they didn't have a lot of interest in the mass. But then I always say that they came together and God was among them.[44]

Marian Employment Agency

Indiscussions regarding the establishment of an employment agency for Irish emigrants in London, the Catholic Social Welfare Bureau clarified its stance on arranging employment for emigrants in a paper dated 1964, signed by Cecil J Barrett. [45] The paper stated: 'in its concentration of effort of assistance to emigrants in its spiritual and moral fields, it has won for itself a unique place among national Catholic migration agencies throughout the world. International Catholic migration authorities recognise the particular efficacy and value of the work which the bureau carries on at present and the particular service which it is in consequence able to offer each year to

thousands of emigrants.'[46] It expressed a fear that if the bureau were to arrange employment it could be perceived as facilitating and promoting emigration.It explained: 'a Catholic welfare agency which engages in employment placement accepts a greater moral responsibility to both employer and employee than does an ordinary business agency.'[47] Eamonn Casey described the practical thinking behind the scheme's beginnings:

> I became very aware of the number of people who were coming over without having any jobs already secured. And so I got the idea that it would be vital for us to set up a proper employment agency for the Irish that they would be dealt with honestly and fairly at all times, without having to pay. There was a great parish priest in Quex Road, Kilburn, and a well-known London church. And it was this man, Fr John Dore, a man from County Limerick, who made Kilburn parish such a focus for the Irish. He used to import the Irish papers every Sunday. Sure the Irish came from all over London to mass at Quex Road to get the Irish papers.[48]

In response to requests from priests dissatisfied with employment placement, an office was opened in Quex Road, Kilburn in 1964.[49] Eamonn Casey recalled the response he received from Fr Dore to his idea for an employment agency. He was told: 'no problem.I'll buy the house across the road and you can put your employment agency on the ground floor and you can have a flat above it for yourself.'[50] Eamonn Casey explainedhow the Marian Employment Agency, the name given to this new organization,came to beknown as a place where migrants from all over Ireland knew they would receive help. It was concerned with responsible emigration, when emigration was necessary. It was a non-profit service to whichemployers paid introductory fees. In the late 1960s, it was dealing with 3,000 applications annually.[51]

The Marian Employment Agency held its first annual conference in Limerick on 7 June 1965 under the aegis of the Bishop of Limerick; the theme was responsible emigration.It was attended by 450 delegates.[52] In *Irish Emigrant's Welfare,*the Agency's newsletter, there is a message from Cardinal Heenan thanking the agency for its very important

contribution, remarking:'it is not too much to say that the future of the Catholic Church in London depends in large measure on the Irish families coming to live and work here'.[53] All advertisements from the agency had a statement printed in capital letters on them: 'If you are happily employed in Ireland—stay at home. If you must come to England let us arrange your employment and accommodation before you leave home.'[54] It expressed a particular concern with young boys and girls under eighteen who could only possibly manage to afford to live in London if employed in a live-in position. It worked closely with the extensive network of welfare bureaux in Ireland, and in addition to placing skilled and, more importantly, unskilled workers in employment, it produced leaflets on career guidance. It was financed by the Oblate order in Inchicore who bought the building at 14, QuexRoad and ran it as a non-profit making organization with six directors: three priests and three lay men.[55] The priests involved were Fr John Dore (Oblate Order), Fr Joe Kennedy (Columban) and Fr Eamonn Casey (Limerick Diocese). In a letter dated 1 December 1965, Sean McGill from the neighbouring Emerald Staff Agency expressed his resentment at the establishment of the Marian Employment Agency, arguing that he had been providing a very effective service and that he viewed the Marian Employment Agency as competition.[56] Emerald's, however was a private, profit-making venture.

Involvement of Religious Orders

In 1965,the same time that the Marion Employment Agency was providing such vital support, there was a crisis in the Chaplaincy as the number of those involved had dwindled to seven or eight. The religious orders were invited to assist and in September 1966, the Irish provincials made twenty-eight priests available, most of whom became parish chaplains in Birmingham and Westminster. O'Shea views this as an important milestone for the Chaplaincy, marking the heavy involvement ofthe religious orders.[57] Orders which were involved included Augustinians, Carmelites (O Carm.), Carmelites (O.D.C.), Capuchins, De La Salle Brothers, Dominican Order, Franciscan Order, Franciscan Brothers, Holy Ghost Congregation, Jesuits, Marists,

Norbetine Fathers, Oblates, Redemptorists, Rosminians, Sacred Hearts Community, Salesians, Servites, SMA Fathers, St Columban's Missionary Society, Vincentians, Brigidine Sisters, Dominican Congregation, Holy Family, Irish Sisters of Charity, Mercy Sisters, Presentation Sisters, Sacred Heart of Mary and St Joseph of Peace.[58]

The Irish Welfare and Information Centre (IWIC), Birmingham

The IWIC in Birmingham was founded in 1957 by a small group of Irish people greatly concerned with the lack of advice and information available to the young Irish arriving during and after the Second World War.[59] For the first forty-five years, it was under the direction of the Oblate Order. Initially, premises were found centrally, near New Street, to respond to Irish people arriving in the city for the first time. The services provided by the centre were overwhelmingly comprehensive. It provided information and advice services regarding accommodation, employment, medical, religious and cultural activities and links with local and national organizations. In relation to accommodation, it liaised with landlords to break down barriers and address prejudices; it negotiated a delayed-payment scheme for rent on behalf of newcomers until they found employment. In relation to employment, it liaised with personnel managers in factories and elsewhere around the city seeking to deal with issues arising from ignorance and prejudice.[60] It advised new arrivals of the necessity to register to avail of the NHS, linking into NHS services and making regular visits to those in hospital—a practice which still continues today. Sr Theresadescribed her many visits to the 'forgotten Irish' often left alone in hospital, feeling isolated and scared.[61] Regarding religious services, it circulated cards with the times of masses and provided contact names for relevant societies. It engaged with cultural activities, including the GAA, Irish dancing, language, music and Ceilidhe clubs and developed links with housing departments, housing associations, the private rented sector, social services, education, prison and probation services, churches, police and Birmingham voluntary services council.[62]

In 2007, I visited the centre at Digbeth, Birmingham where I attended the 'Tuesday Club', a luncheon club for the elderly Irish.

I talked with many who recalled their coerced emigration, and the importance of the Centre in their lives over the past fifty years.[63] Many of them recalled the loneliness and isolation they felt as young emigrants and later as they struggled to rear families.[64] Many talked of the particularly difficult times they experienced in the aftermath of the Birmingham bombing and how the Centre, and Fr JoeTaaffe in particular, had been a beacon in troubled years when they were made to feel like terrorists in their 'home' city.[65] They spoke of violence and ostracism. Many Irish changed their names by deed poll. For many, perhaps, the most difficult experience was when 'we lost our Saint Patrick's Day Parade'.[66] Elderly men and women told me of times when they were afraid to go to work, afraid to bring their children to school, afraid to speak with their Irish brogue, and of how Fr Taaffe was their voice and their courage.[67] It was said that he was 'the right man, at the right time'.[68] In Birmingham, Sr Theresa recounted how she had started work there with trepidation and Fr Taaffe had told her 'all you need is love'.[69] A similar sentiment was expressed by Archbishop Michael Neary, who explained that Fr Taaffe was someone special, a great communicator and fearless.[70] Fr Bobby Gilmore, with tears in his eyes, spoke with a similar admiration for Fr Taaffe.[71] Moving accounts in the archives describe the fundraising venture that followed his death as:'a significant memorial to a great man'.[72]

The IWIC's original site was a single room in Moat Row, run by a small number of volunteers who offered help and support to Irish immigrants. The service began providing clothing, advice and some financial assistance to the needy. Housing problems were identified early on as a major issue.[73] Fr Murphy, as has been described earlier on in the book, was instrumental in developing the Catholic Housing Aid Society (CHAS) and Family Housing Association in Birmingham. Emigration from Ireland to Birmingham was high in the post-war years and through the 1950s and 1960s. Those arriving were unprepared for the hardship they encountered. They were discriminated against in relation to housing and employment. The priests at St Anne's Parish, with the help of volunteers, decided there was a need to provide help and so the welfare service began and gathered momentum, in 1974, with the purchase of new premises and offices and a hostel for young

men at Plunkett House, Shadwell Street.[74] This was paid for by the Irish Episcopal Commission. Further progress was marked in the 1980s with the opening of a drop-in centre which provided hot meals and clothing to those in need. The IWIC depended on fundraising to continue its services, depending largely on a monthly 'super draw', an annual autumn fair and an annual St Patrick's banquet. In interview, Fr Paul Byrne laughed at his own youthful enthusiasm as he recalled how, in the early days he had opened a little shop where he sold communion dresses, rosary beads and other goods to fund the essential welfare service.[75]

In 1991, the organization moved to 72, Digbeth. This coincided with further expansion as a result of improved funding from the Irish government and Birmingham City Council. In the mid-1990s, the development of the Alcohol Project and the Health Research Project led to a need for further space, which was rented from Cara Housing Association in Cara House (also in Digbeth).[76] A business plan was developed for the IWIC, Birmingham between 1995 and 1996.[77] A report was jointly produced by the Irish Welfare and Information Centre and Tionólna n-Éireannach, Birmingham (Birmingham Irish Community Forum). Contributors included Bridie Nugent (IWIC administrator) and GobnaitNíChrualaoí (Community Development Officer of Tionólna n-Éireannach, Birmingham).[78] It recognized that, in the context of an ageing community and the economic climate, long-term unemployment and increasing family breakdown, its aim was: 'to offer quality housing for everyone, those settled and the newly arrived; to ensure clients are in receipt of correct benefit entitlements and that counselling and long term support to vulnerable single-parent families and their children be provided'.[79]

In 2000, the whole organization moved and becamea tenant of the Irish Club. Under the direction of Bridie Nugent, the IWIC grew from a staff of four to twenty-nine (with an additional fifty volunteers); it has become a dynamic professional service, dealing with over 40,000 telephone enquiries a year and 10,000 (sometimeschallenging) clients.[80]

In May 2003, the Oblate Order, which had overseen the running of the centre for forty-five years, decided that its services were

needed elsewhere and the IWIC passed into lay management, with Bridie Nugent as its Director. This followed on from the opening of St Eugene's Court in 2002—a supported accommodation complex catering for forty-four single Irish men. Very importantly, they have their 'own doors' but share the support and camaraderie of other tenants for meals and social activities.[81]

In 2007, Bridie Nugent took time out of her busy schedule to show me around St Eugene's Court, where the quality and standard of the accommodation and support services were immediately visible, as was the warmth between the Director, staff and service users. Due to ongoing growth, the team moved to St Anne's Parish Centre in January 2008. In 2009, the IWIC developed a collaborative partnership with BICF (Birmingham Irish Community Forum) which had been set up in 1993 to deal with economic, social, cultural and educational issues. The organizations merged in 2010. In October 2011, the organization was renamed Irish in Birmingham to reflect its position as a focal point for the city's Irish community.[82]

Hammersmith Irish Welfare Bureau

In parallel with the IWIC in Birmingham, a need for particular assistance was identified in Hammersmith, London. In 1967, the Augustinians had been asked to appoint priests to the Chaplaincy Scheme. Frs Leahy and Fogarty were the first to arrive in London. WhileFr Leahy returned to Ireland later that year and was replaced by Fr Lawlor, Fr Fogarty stayed on. He and his colleaguesrecognized that a more specific welfare service than the support mechanisms in place through visits to building sites, lodging houses, dance halls and pubs was necessary. With few resources available, they set up a fund which would embrace a plan for the future. In a report from the period, Fr Lawlor reflected:

> In retrospect the setting-up of this fund meant far more than just raising money; it gave the chaplaincy work certain prominence in the area as it brought about an awareness of the many existing problems of some of our Irish people. Our presence became

> better known and as a consequence the number of referrals from the local parishes and various local organisations increased. With money and problems on the increase the idea of some kind of local unit was conceived as part of the chaplaincy team. In discussion with experienced men like Bishop Casey and Father Paul Byrne not only did we get advice but a great amount of encouragement to establish such a unit.[83]

The Irish Welfare Bureau was chosen as a name to reflect the directive, informative nature of the aims of the founders. The aim of the Bureau was to try to prevent immigrants from becoming social problems, by helping them in their initial stages. It concentrated on welfare issues, directing the Irish immigrants to the relevant community services: 'when these are not available for their particular need, to supply this want to the best of its ability; helping to find suitable employment and accommodation; giving information about social activities andhelping with repatriation'. [84]

One of the first tasks of the Bureau was to meet the Director of Operations for the Borough of Hammersmith, in the hope that the Borough might consider giving office accommodation and financial help. Fr Lawlor reported how they 'received only words of encouragement'.[85] Subsequently, Fr Curran, the parish priest in Hammersmith, gave permission to turn a disused room in the basement of the priory into an office. In addition, he gave the use of the front parlour for interviewing.[86] Early in 1971,the chaplains investigated the possibility of a separate building and soon received permission to build a pre-cast building in the parish car park. This was an important milestone in the development of the Bureau which saw the demand for its service escalate in the following decades. Work on the building commenced in October 1971.[87]

Fr Lawlor's experience in the west of London convinced him of the need for a social worker. He recognized that some emigrants were fleeing social and personal issues by going to England, and that there was a need for a social work service to deal with the problems they encountered. With the assistance of Fr Paul Byrne, an approach was made early in 1970 to the Provincial of the Irish Sisters of Charity

with a view to their appointing one of the sisters to undertake this work. The Mother Provincial responded by making Sr Alice, who was completing her studies, available for work in Hammersmith.Sr Alice Mooney arrived in mid-October 1970.[88] A disused room in the basement of Hammersmith Priory was converted for her office. It had facilities for interviewing in the front parlour. Between 1971 and 1972, separate premises were built with a grant from the IECE. This was the beginning of the Irish Welfare Bureau in Hammersmith.[89]

In its first year, it dealt with 511 people; by 1992, this figure had risen to 5,488.[90] In the first social welfare report, dated November 1971, Sr Alice outlined how the area covered by the Bureau coincided roughly with the London Borough of Hammersmith, from White City in the north, to Fulham in the south,with Shepherds Bush and Hammersmith in between.[91] In 1970, the estimated population in the area was 187,890 and the Irish were the biggest immigrant group.[92] Sr Alice's initial work involved making links with social workers in local area teams. Fr Lawlor reported: 'The Bureau owes a great debt to Sister Alice; no words of mine can adequately express my appreciation to her. Her untiring devotion to work has been a wonderful example to all of us who are associated with the bureau.'[93] Looking back on its work after twelve years, Fr Lawlor recalled:

> The ultimate aim of the bureau is to concentrate on preventive work: as far as possible, with a more thorough preparation for emigration; continuing help and support where needed on arrival in England, etc. One cannot ignore the many problems already on the doorstep. The latter form the main bulk of the work done by the bureau over the last twelve years. It is in no way the aim of the Bureau to overlap on local authority services; rather it hopes to supplement these where the needs of the Irish are concerned. Neither does the bureau by setting itself up as a service for the Irish immigrant wish to become a source of segregation rather than integration. Because accommodation is such a pressing need of the average Irish immigrant the Bureau tries to help in this direction. It meets with more or less the same frustrations as most other agencies which try to help in this way;

> i.e. some success with young single people and almost complete failure where the elderly, physically handicapped and parents with children are concerned. This is one of the areas the bureau hopes to develop more fully in the coming year.[94]

The first voluntary worker at the Bureau was Nan McGill, and her recruitment enabled the service to expand further. Archival material acknowledges the hard work of Fr Lawlor:

> Anyone who knows Fr Lawlor is aware of his genuine interest in and deep concern for the needs of people. Not only have these qualities been the driving force behind the establishment of the Irish Welfare Bureau and the work he has undertaken for clients over the last few years, but they have also contributed greatly to the happy atmosphere and team spirit which exists at the Bureau.[95]

These sentiments were echoed in many of the interviews I conducted with Chaplaincy personnel who had worked alongside Fr Lawlor.

Haringey Cultural Community Centre

With the Hammersmith Bureau well established, the Chaplaincy oversaw the development of the Haringey Irish Cultural and Community Centre which wasset up in 1987 in response to the identified needs of the Irish community. Sr Joan Kane, who was recruited from the Ursuline Order in 1982, was charged with the work of developing a derelict house in Haringey with a view to providing services for the Irish. She explained that the building work was done by Irish volunteers.[96] While the centre was being built, Sr Joan worked out of an office in Wood Green and worked with many homeless people around Finsbury Park; these were mostly Irish but there were others too. She explained that Haringey Council was left-wing which impacted favourably on the context in which the centre developed.[97] There were a lot of new emigrants, and while many of them were educated, others were not; some had the added complication of complexsocial problems. Sr Joan explained the

political climate in Britain at the time and, as one involved closely in the Birmingham Six campaign, she experienced harassment with her home being searched.[98] She talked of being 'patted down' on entry to the Old Bailey but seemed undaunted by the experience.[99] However, she explained that many of the young Irish received much more gruelling attention and harassment.[100] The Birmingham Six held the party to celebrate their release in the Haringey Centre.

There was a high proportion of women with children and older isolated Irish in the area and SrJoan set about responding to their needs. She reached out to the isolated, elderlyIrish population and with a minibus from Help the Aged, was able to collect them and take them to the tea dances and luncheon club at Pretoria Road. The activities included organizing an annual Christmas dinner for 200-300. Among those in need were single women whose husbands had pre-deceased them, many of whom had provided care to others throughout their lives as nurses. One of the most poignant tasks, Sr Joan explained,was organizing funerals, sometimes for those who were totally cut-off from their families.[101] Her role also involved work with young Irish who, Sr Joan said, had to be educated that they had a right to welfare.[102] In addition to the support for the elderly and youth, the CaraHousingAssociation emerged from the Haringey Centre; it was established to provide housing for single homeless men.After eighteen years of hard work, Sr Joan left Haringey; however, the Centre is still in existence and now runs an advice and support service, a social club and remains an important community resource for a wide variety of groups.[103]

Action Group for Irish Youth (AGIY)

The individual centres and the Marion Employment Agency in London worked hard to support individuals whose immigration to Britain had not gone as planned or had not been well-planned. However, in the 1980s it became apparent that the existing institutions and organizations did not do enough to look after the young Irish. The AGIY based at the London Irish Centre was establishedin 1984 in response to increased awareness and concern at the wave of unplanned emigration amongst

Irish youth.[104] There was concern at the increasing numbers of destitute young people arriving hopeless and despairing. In a press release on its launch, the AGIY stated: 'for many Irish youth there are no alternatives whatsoever to poverty and permanent unemployment in Ireland and that the hazards and difficulties of unplanned emigration represent the only possible route to achieving a better quality of life'.[105] It initiated and published research to raise awareness at government level on the nature and extent of problems associated with unplanned emigration. It sought to raise awareness among the general population, parents, educators, clergy and youth on the hazards of unplanned emigration.

The Two-Island Liaison Group

On 11 March 1984, only three months after the Harrods bomb, Bishop Eamonn Casey visited London and, with Fr Bobby Gilmore,addressed a concert attended by two and a half thousand people at the St Patrick's Festival. Bishop Casey addressed members of the Irish community on behalf of the IECE:

> There is a great pressure on the Irish community in Britain. I know that because of terrorism on the streets of London, the impact of the PTA, because of the political situation in NI and the resulting strains in the Anglo-Irish relations. There is a danger that some may do one of two things, become invisible and silent, on the one hand or lend tacit support to the people who see violence as the only solution to the Northern Ireland problem. Both reactions are absolutely wrong. Not only is silence not the answer but there are times when silence is insensitive as well as useless. When English people begin to think of NI, that is when you should become most active for peace, not be silent. Violence, as we all know it, is not the solution.[106]

Bishop Casey said that 'the lack of any real political initiatives in relation to Northern Ireland and the seeming indifference of the British government had created a vacuum in which violence and marginal politicos are striving'.[107] He insisted that 'Christianity and

common interests of all concerned in the conflict demand that there must be a better way, that there will be a better way'.[108] He continued:

> You, the Irish in Britain, have a special role in finding this better way. You are citizens of this country and therefore you can influence public and political opinion. It is vital that you do so. … Lose no opportunity to put forward the need for political initiatives on the part of the British government and do this not in a spirit of propaganda or from a partisan position but in the interest of both people…. If you are involved in community activities, expand these activities, don't withdraw from them, and rather expand them. This kind of activity gives you the rights to be listened to. If your contacts with your British neighbours are merely lightly social, then expand these contacts in the interest of dialogue. You must redouble your efforts to influence public and political opinion, and above all, engage in dialogue. Dialogue is essential.[109]

Bishop Caseyquoted Pope John Paul: 'Dialogue is the search for what is, and which remains, common to people even in the midst of tensions, opposition and conflict…such a dialogue crosses, even breaks down, barriers and divisions.'[110] On the following Sunday, Bishop Casey celebrated the mass of Saint Patrick in Westminster Cathedral, at the request of the Council of Irish Counties with Canon Oliver Kelly, Administrator of Westminster Cathedral, as one of ten concelebrants. He described to me the fear he felt as he began to speak the homily, but how the fear left him as he continued.[111] He began with the Prayer of Saint Patrick before going on to say:

> Celebrating St Patrick's feast means renewing, reaffirming our commitment to our mission to witness to God's love and gospel values in our lives. In present circumstances it also means working for a peaceful solution and for reconciliation in the North of Ireland. There is little use, however, in renewing our commitment both to work for peace and to fulfil our mission if we allow something to happen which makes both impossible. I

> refer to the danger that recent terrorists actions in this country, whose violence is as repulsive to us as it is to all decent peace-loving people and the existence and use of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, may cause some of you to withdraw from your local communities. It may even generate resentment that could lead to your alienation. You must not allow this to happen. Since a major factor in the ultimate solution to the terrorism in both our countries is a realistic political initiative by the government in this country, you are in a unique position to help. As a result you have a Christian duty to help.[112]

After the mass, Bishop Casey and Fr P.J. Byrne distributed 2,000 cards printed with a Prayer of St Patrick and met the congregation on the piazza. He gathered information from the Irish organizations and chaplains for his meeting with Cardinal Hume the following day.[113] It was at this meeting that he first raised the possibility of what was to be a significant and innovative development in the history of the Chaplaincy: the creation of the Two-Island Liaison Group. A proposal for a liaison committee ofthe three Church Hierarchies of Britain and Ireland had been prepared by the Bishops' Commission on Emigrants and submitted by Bishop Eamon Casey (who was Episcopal Secretary of the Commission) to help formulate a Christian response to the Northern Ireland problem.[114] The Commission's submission argued that the Northern Ireland issue was the most pressing problem on both islands; it had a special significance for the Church since it was blurring missionary endeavours and hindering progress to Christian unity at home.[115] Furthermore,the submission asserted that it was a shared problem with its origins in the historic relationship of the two islands.[116] Thus, its solution necessitated a joint approach acknowledging that the Catholic Church on both islands had a great responsibility to provide a Christian response that would create the right climate for its resolution, asserting that it had a unique opportunity of doing so.[117] It viewed the gravity of the Church's responsibility in the light of two factors: that the relevance of the Church must be called into question if it had nothing to contribute to the most challenging issue facing both peoples and that the continuing Northern Ireland problem gravely

affected the missionary endeavours of the Church.[118] It perceived the uniqueness of the Church's position as being central to developing a better understanding between the two island communities as the Catholic community in both islands had a common bond which gave them a unique basis from which to initiate a lead in forming a better understanding.[119] It was suggested that the Irish people living in Britain as Catholicscould be an effective bridge and setting up a liaison committee between the three Hierarchies of the two islands was viewed as a first step in bringing about a better understanding and open dialogue.[120] It was proposed that all three Hierarchies would have to be involved since a response that was not consistent from all three would have no credibility.[121] The submission asserted that a liaison group would have to be permanent and continuing, since reactions to individual incidents had little validity or credibility unless they could be seen as a response arising from a common, positive policy.[122] It was recommended that the liaison committee be small,includingone member from the Hierarchy of England and Wales, one member from the Scottish Hierarchy and two from the Irish—one representing the Northern Ireland bishops and one representing the south of Ireland bishops.[123] A small group would be able to meet and operate easily.To be effective, the organization would have to be serviced by a properly staffed secretariat. The broad terms of reference were summed up in two tenets. The first was to bring about a better understanding, through dialogue, between the Hierarchies and therefore the Catholic people of the two islands.[124] This could in turn, lead the way to a similar opening for the governments of both islands.The second was to research the ways in which, given the Church's position, it could provide an atmosphere within which a political initiative could be effective.[125]

A letter dated 19 September 1984, from Father P J Byrne to Cardinal Basil Hume shows that the proposal for a Two-Island Liaison Group (as submitted by Eamonn Casey in June) had been accepted by the Episcopal Conferences involved. The letter mentioned that Bishop Eamonn Casey of Galway and Bishop Daly of Derry would represent the Irish Hierarchy and Archbishop Winning would represent the Scottish Hierarchy.[126]

This development grew up within the context of a worsening economic climate in Ireland and a worsening situation for those providing services to emigrants. As the annual report of the Irish Welfare Bureau in Hammersmith for 1984 outlines, an issue of concern was the steep decline in job opportunities in Ireland: 'Many—far, far too many—arrived ill-equipped, unprepared, penniless and with no knowledge of who would provide the next night's accommodation, let alone the next meal.'[127] Support and leadership was on hand from the bishops. Just months after the Brighton bomb, courage and strength could be seen in the homily delivered by the Most Reverend Seamus Hegarty, Bishop of Raphoe, in Westminster Cathedral on 17 March 1985:

> While I encourage you to do 'all that is good, all that is noble' as St Paul says and state clearly that it is your duty to do so, I would also have to state clearly that the indigenous community of the host country and its government in particular have a responsibility to ensure that an ethnic grouping is accommodated and protected in expressing its traditions and sense of identity provided it is done so legitimately and ultimately in the best interests of the common good. Governments no less than individuals have their obligations in justice and charity. Not only must a government act with impartiality in its treatment of migrants. It must also be seen to do so. As a measure of its intent it should be particularly sensitive in defending civil rights, freedom of movement of peace-loving citizens and be prepared to review and repeal any law and eliminate any measure executive or legislative which might appear to a reasonable man to be discriminating and infringing human rights… What is of immediate concern to me, and I am certain to you, is that in some way you vicariously are made to share in the guilt of the extremists and that you are looked upon in that light to such an extent that it inhibits your self-expression or prevents your social activities, your business pursuits, or even your freedom to congregate or associate for perfectly legitimate and laudable reasons. I do have grounds for optimism that a more discerning and judicious application of special measures

> has already begun. Nobody will challenge the wisdom much less the necessity of devising methods of coping with terrorists. Equally, no reasonable man could condone the harassing or the detaining of innocent civilians….The IECE wishes to express its solidarity and its pastoral concern for you the members of the Irish Community in Britain. At a recent meeting of the Episcopal Conference in Maynooth it was clearly established that the Emigrant Apostolate is an integral part of the IrishChurch's mission today. Working closely with the Bishop and priests of Westminster and elsewhere in Great Britain we are keen to make additional resources of personnel available to you.[128]

The role of the emigrant chaplain as prophet, speaking with the migrant, was very evident throughout the 1980s. To the sound of silence from the Irish government, Bishop Eamonn Casey spoke to the Knights of St Columbanus on 27 February 1988 and made a plea for the most vulnerable group of Irish emigrants, the sixteen to eighteen year olds who left for lack of work and often ended up on the streets of London.[129] He told the Knights in Dublin:

> People in this age group are not entitled to social welfare here at home but they can get it in Britain. This fact alone makes Britain powerfully, if superficially, attractive for many young people ill-prepared for emigration. It is therefore extremely short-sighted of our government not to provide some welfare assistance for people in this age group. Without it the present levels of unemployment are forcing the most vulnerable of our young people to emigrate without the necessary money, so essential if they are not to end up on the streets of London. The government has reneged on its promise to provide professional advice and information for potential emigrants in manpower service offices. Now that Manpower has been taken over by FÁS, it is essential that the government fulfil the commitment made by its predecessor in 1985 to allocate proper resources so that an adequate advice and information service can be provided for those intending to emigrate. The government must take its role seriously. To have

> pegged its aid to welfare, information and counselling services for emigrants at last year's figure of £255,000 is hardly evidence that the government regards emigration, particularly of the most vulnerable and unprepared as the critical social problem it really is. Indeed, it is a measure of the low priority given to emigration that, while the exchequer saves millions each year because so many continue to leave the country, the governments actual contribution to emigrant advice and welfares service is so pitifully small. The Church will continue to play its part, as it has done for many years, to help and support our emigrants wherever their greatest needs are, in London, New York or Europe.[130]

Archbishop Clifford also spoke out. On 6 September 1989, the IECE and Bank of Ireland launched one million 'emigrant postcards', as part of a campaign developed to fund the maintenance and expansion of the services of the IECE. The campaign ran through September and October 1989, when for 50p, a postage-paid card could be bought and sent to anyone, anywhere in the world. The venture was intended to raise awareness among the public, encourage people to make contact with those who had left home and to raise funds. Speaking at the launch, Archbishop Clifford stated: 'We need addiction counsellors, social workers, welfare officers on the streets meeting them and in centres that can provide care for them. These are our own people and that is why the Commission now turns to our own people for help.'[131] Referring to the wave of emigration in the 1980s, Archbishop Clifford said that, although the IECE had prepared for it, 'nothing could have readied them for the tidal wave that did arrive. Our services have been stretched to breaking point and our resources have been desperately depleted.'[132] The Archbishop referred to the 46,000 more emigrants than the previous year.[133] The following year, Sr Francis Cummins, writing in the London Irish News, highlighted the exploitation of young Irish men by their own people:

> A Con Job indeed, but who is being conned at the end of the day, at the end of life, but our young inexperienced Irish migrant who opts for the benefits of 'cash in hand' without a

> thought for the future. "I'll only be here for a few years," he says, "I'll make some money and then get the hell out of here". But how quickly the years slip by, first five, then ten, and with them the hope of returning. So it was with the labourers of those who are now homeless: crippled with arthritis, rheumatism and injury from the workplace, doing their daily rounds of the soup kitchens. And so it will be for the boys of the '90s unless the situation is taken in hand now. Many contractors favour this Lump System of labour as they retain total control over the worker who will have work tomorrow only if he conforms today. The subbie makes a 1000% profit on each worker and since they are unofficial workers, he can dismiss them at a moment's notice and can abdicate all responsibility for their safety and welfare. This injustice forces these underpaid workers to sign on and draw the dole to supplement their income, a situation that is not only condoned by the subbie who allows him time off to sign on but used by him to make further demands on the worker, be it 600 ft high on scaffolding or deep in the trenches.[134]

Poignantly, the pieceends with an expression of sympathy to friends and relatives of seven named men who had died in the weeks leading up to the publication of the article.

Even in the face of silence from the Irish government, the Catholic Church continued to make a link between Gospel teaching and migration, and the personnel of the Irish Chaplaincy continued to speak out for the Irish emigrant. The formation of the Two-Island Liaison Group was a powerful gesture in the face of such silence. It was a move which forced a link between migrant experience on the ground and political prevarication in the face of tensions and difficulties. Once more, the Emigrant Chaplaincy had shown itself to be a leader in the pursuit of social justice.

Immigrant Counselling and Psychotherapy (ICAP)

In the 1990s, another initiative developed when Teresa Gallagher, having identified a gap in counselling services, established ICAP. This

met the need for 'culturally-sensitive counselling for people of Irish origin'.[135] Teresa recognized that despite the high incidence of mental health problems among the Irish in Britain, there was a reluctance to use the statutory services as there was a feeling that these services did not cater for the specific needs of Irish people. Reports from the period indicate that the establishment of ICAP was not an easy task, primarily due to a lack of awareness within the statutory and funding bodies of the particular difficulties of the Irish community in Britain—at a time when the Irish were not defined as a specific ethnic minority and Anglo-Irish tensions still existed.[136] As veteran lobbyists, the Chaplaincy rallied behind ICAP and, following extensive liaison with relevant bodies and with the support of clinicians and volunteers, ICAP was finally established as a charity. After four years of development, ICAP was officially opened by the President of Ireland, Mary McAleese in 1996.[137] ICAP currently operates throughout the UK, with a network of 260 psychotherapists.[138] The service provides one-to-one weekly therapy and group work and referrals come from all sources, including self-referral. It caters for an average of 350 clients a week, 51 per cent of whom are women and 49 per cent of whom are men.[139] In 2006, ICAP moved into purpose-built premises near Finsbury Park, becoming, according to Teresa Gallagher:'the first concrete sign that the psychological needs of the Irish cannot be neglected any more'.[140] The organization also has aregional centre in the West Midlands, with an office in Birmingham. As it has grown, ICAP has provided a service for people from other ethnic groups. Nowadays ICAP works in partnership with other organizations to develop culturally-sensitive services. After a decade, Teresa Gallagher passed the reins to Gary Fereday who was replaced in 2013 by Catherine Hennessy. ICAP provides 14,000 therapy sessions nationwide, through its network of 100 therapists.[141]

Most striking about the work of the centres and their 'spin-off' organizations is the realization about how effectively the Chaplaincy has anticipated needs over decades, often before they were expressed by the Irish community. Its endeavours have encompassed so much more than direct service provision, as is clear from its strategic involvement in the Two-Island Liaison committee. The Chaplaincy members were living and working with Irish migrants through very difficult times and

did not shirk from their commitment to social justice.The Chaplaincy's legacy is abundantly clear from the sustainability of services that have endured for several decades and continue to thrive.

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8

The Irish Council for Prisoners Overseas (ICPO)

With its track record on identifying need and providing innovative solutions, the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy was well-placed in the 1980s to address the need for some kind of support for Irish men and women in prison outside their home country. In 1985, ICPO was established. Since then, it has been responsible for fuelling campaigns, instigating policy change, publishing the Flood Report in 2007 and supporting individuals who are vulnerable and far from home, as well as supporting prisoners' families. ICPO has worked tirelessly through very challenging decades characterized for the Irish in Britain by high profile miscarriages of justice and the PTA (Prevention of Terrorism Act). The organization was synonymous with the very important and successful campaign which pressurized the Irish government to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on the Transfer of Sentenced Prisoners 'out of humanitarian considerations and in the interest of their families'[1] and most recently,it has influenced British prison policy in responding to the needs of Irish Travellers. ICPO sought to remind the Irish and British governments that: 'the human needs of Irish prisoners cannot be dictated by political or financial considerations and that in any civilized society, loss of liberty for the individual must be deemed punishment enough.'[2]

ICPO,is a sub-section of the Irish Emigrant Council. As a global organization, it has contact with Irish people in prisons in more than twenty countries, the majority of whom are in the UK with many more detained throughout the US, Australia, Europe, South and Central America and the Far East. It is estimated that, at any one time, there are up to 1,000 Irish people in prison overseas.[3] ICPO works for all Irish prisoners wherever they are. It makes no distinction in terms of religious faith, the nature of the prison conviction, or of a prisoner's status.Irish prisoners now constitute the second largest ethnic group (after Polish prisoners) within the prison system in England and Wales.[4] ICPO currently has offices and staff in London and in Maynooth, County Kildare.

Beginnings: Identification of the Problem

In 1984, in an address to the Annual Chaplains' Conference in Dublin, the Irish Primate, Cardinal Ó Fiaich, spoke about the 'supergrass' system and the strip searching of women prisoners in Armagh.[5] In relation to the PTA, the Cardinal indicated: 'there is an obvious need for some group or agency which will disclose the hardship being caused to the detainees and their families'.[6] A year later,ICPO was fulfilling this prophetic role.

The Compton Report of 1971 acknowledged the ill-treatment of suspects under interrogation.[7] In 1976, the European Court of Human Rights found the British government guilty of using inhuman and degrading treatment, including hooding and sleep deprivation.[8] In 1979, the Bennett Reportconfirmed allegations of mistreatment of prisoners.[9] For the Irish community in Britain, there were a number of developments which caused concern regarding the treatment of migrants, many of whom were already under pressure socially and economically. The PTA was applied after the Birmingham bombings of 1974. It extended the maximum detention of suspects from 48 hours to seven days and led to a ban on members of political parties linked to paramilitaries entering 'the mainland'. In 1978, under the Emergency Powers Act, there was a further legal basis for house searches and checkpoints. Notably, 1979 saw the killing of Airey Neave, Shadow NI

spokesman, and eighteen British soldiers at Warrenpointas well as the death of Lord Mountbatten in a bomb blast. The years1980 and 1981 were dominated by hunger strikes and associated tensions. On 5 May 1981, Bobby Sands was the first of ten hunger strikers in Northern Ireland to die. Cardinal Ó Fiaich made representations to Margaret Thatcher regarding prisoners' conditions. 'What do they want?' was her response.[10] In 1983, Harrods in London was bombed, and in 1984 the Brighton bombings occurred during the Conservative Party Conference. The New Ireland Forum Report was organized by Garret Fitzgerald, based on submissions by 300 interested parties.[11] Tonge writes: 'the 1984 New Ireland Forum Report confirmed the view of most parties in the Irish Republic that a purely internal settlement in Northern Ireland was impossible'.[12] The Forum Report was rejected by Margaret Thatcher. In 1985, the Anglo Irish Agreement was signed.

This is the context out of whichICPO emerged. In 1985, in consultation with Fr PJ Byrne, Fr Bobby Gilmore establishedICPO to identify and respond to the particular needs of Irish prisoners abroad and their families, regardless of crime, status or religious belief. The primary aim was to'have a chaplain for Irish people in prison'.[13] Mary McAleese (later to become President of Ireland) was one of the founders of ICPO. It emerged in the midst of major political tensions, coinciding with several high-profile miscarriages of justice cases including the Birmingham Six, the Guildford Four, the Winchester Three[14] and the Judith Ward Case.[15] Bobby Gilmore, whose name was synonymous with the organization for two decades, explained that there was an increased awareness amongst those working on the ground, that Irish people were being beaten up 'and nobody shouted, not even the chaplains in prison'.[16] Fr Gilmore explained that 'the PTA was taking hold of the Irish community. Innocent people were being brought in.'[17] He viewed the development of ICPO in the context of worldwide involvement of diaspora communities in conflict and he stressed the importance of enabling people to be subjects of their own destinies, rather than objects of other people's.[18] He stressed infringements of aspects of human rights and liberty and the need to monitor what was happening—to lobby and to campaign.[19] ICPO aimed to co-ordinate information on the PTA and to publicize its

consequences. In March 1990, to mark the first anniversary of the PTA being made permanent,ICPO, with Irish community leaders, Church representatives, MPs and others, led a campaign to repeal the Act. ICPO personnel spoke out on behalf of Irish prisoners and their families and strove for justice and human rights, in line with the often-cited Gospel teaching: 'when I was in prison you visited me' (*Mt* 25:35).

Fr Donal Spring was the first priest to work for ICPO, and Nuala Kelly was employed as Co-ordinator. Fr Gilmore explained how: 'It had a life of its own after that. There was a constant struggle for money. It is easy for people to get involved in issues which are clean, not those which are controversial and conflictual'.[20] He implied that the Church does not like conflict. He received personal criticism from some bishops for his own criticism of the PTA, and for some in the Church, there was a level of discomfort with issues like the Birmingham Six and those suffering from the effects of the PTA. He stressed: 'People say it is pastoral; sure it is. These were the issues that the Chaplaincy had to deal with.'[21] Gilmore quoted Pope John Paul II at the World Congress of Immigrants in 1985:

> The church herself must bear witness to the quality of integration that she practices in her bosom. Is she not 'the Sacrament of Unity', welcoming diversity in unity, giving testimony to the reconciliation that Christ obtained through the Cross? More fully than other social groups, Catholic communities should experience this dynamic of fraternal unity and respect for difference. Thanks to the Holy Spirit, they should work ceaselessly to build up a people of brothers and sisters, speaking the language of love, to be ferment in the construction of human unity, of a civilisation of love.[22]

Fr Bobby Gilmore indicated that Chaplaincy personnel were often ill-prepared for their challenging work in Britain as part of the emigrant ministry.[23] He explained: 'I went to college in London every year for thirty years to try to understand migration and its causes, to get an intellectual understanding of pull and push factors.'[24] He indicated the role of the emigrant chaplain was a pastoral one: to meet the

migrant 'wherever they are at, not where you want them to be… To be a beacon on the horizon for people to relate to, link with people in centres who had skills to do so.'[25] He explained the importance of professional workers like Anastasia Crickley, Nuala Kelly and others who 'brought a different dimension to the work of the Chaplaincy through professionalism and expertise', and the ability and skills required to network with local structures within and between Britain and Ireland and beyond.[26] Fr Gilmore referred to the extremely sensitive political context of the period relating to Anglo-Irish tensions, during which chaplains found themselves, 'all of a sudden in a position with media where you have to reflect your Irish identity'.[27] He said that this was something he had to come to grips with both personally and in his role as Director of the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy.[28] He had a great appreciation of Brendan McLua and Tony Beatty who started the *Irish Post* and 'came up with a brand of nationalism beyond Catholicism, resolved by the ballot box'.[29] He also emphasized the importance of Liverpool-based Tommy Walshe who played a strategic role for decades working through the Federation of Irish Societies to further the networking potential of the Irish in Britain.[30] All of these factors fed into the development of ICPO in the 1980s.

In addition to the one-to-one work with prisoners, which involved visiting them, advocating on their behalf and providing advice, information and support to prisoners' families, Fr Gilmore saw his job as organizing the Chaplaincy to be effective and to liaise with the local church. He felt that, in turn, the local church had an obligation to respond, explaining: 'Cardinal Hume took a very direct interest. I felt we had a responsibility to talk to the Cardinal of pressures experienced by the Irish community'.[31] ICPO personnel met with Cardinal Hume every three months to achieve this. There were 750,000 Irish-born people at Sunday masses at the time when the tensions arose.[32] Fr Gilmore suggested that: 'It was easy to be Irish in Britain prior to that.'[33] He believed that the Chaplaincy had a duty to meet emerging needs—to work with people who were unable to avail of mainstream services and networks. He felt that:'It is a difficult job to match their hope.'[34] The job had an educational dimension too, to inform Irish society on the meaning of emigration and the importance of preparation

for migration. He recognized the problem for governments who were caught in a bind: 'the danger is that governments can see this [emigration] as a failure'.[35]

In 2005, on the twentieth anniversary of the establishment ofICPO, Fr Paul Byrne wrote: 'As committees go, it seemed to have had the highest collective IQ of any I had served on. Just take one of the professions represented—that of theologian and rubbing shoulders around that table in my time were Professor Pat Hannon, Dermot Lane and Bernard Treacy.'[36] He also wrote of how they were blessed to have Nuala Kelly as co-ordinator who, he said: 'had a deep sense of justice of what should be and, sadly too often, was not'.[37] In 2007,in interview, Nuala Kelly explained the importance of the Board ofICPO in helping them reflect on their work, recalling how, from its inception, ICPO was very much focused on striving for social justice and drew on community development principles.[38] Dermot Lane, also in interview, suggested that perhaps his contribution as a board member was his understanding of Church politics and structures.[39] He stressed that ICPO very much reflected Gospel teaching: 'when I was in prison you visited me' (*Mt* 25:35). This belief was reiterated by Fr Gerry McFlynn, interviewed for this book in 2007.[40]

From the beginning,ICPO did casework with prisoners and families. Established to respond to a need highlighted in research undertaken in 1984 by Anastasia Crickley,[41] it quickly learned the need was even greater than anticipated.ICPO was very strategic in how it successfully persuaded the Irish government to take some responsibility for the challenges. In 1985, Bishop Eamonn Casey met Minister for Foreign Affairs, Peter Barry and, taking a very novel approach, told him thatICPO would work for one year without seeking state funds and then report back regarding the level of need. In June 1986, ICPO negotiated with the Department of Foreign Affairs, seeking funding for work throughout the world. In September 1987, DION contacted Fr Byrne to offer £9,000-11,000 toICPO on three conditions: it was to be spent on a fulltime member of staff for London; it was to be used solely for welfare work andICPO would produce an annual financial report.[42] In December 1987,ICPO received its first grant of £9,000 to be spent in England.It has continued to receive funding ever since. In

an internal report to the IECE,ICPO indicated: 'We are doing the work of the Department of Foreign Affairs in many instances'.[43]

In 1988,ICPO reviewed its work of the initial three years and acknowledged that it had succeeded in that it had filled a gap in service provision, ranging from crisis intervention, advice, practical help and moral support to provision of accommodation, advocacy and a ready ear.[44] It fundamentally reduced the sense of isolation and hopelessness experienced by prisoners and particularly their families. It provided material for research, based upon whichICPO gained moral justification for highlighting issues. In its early years,ICPO provided information on prison and the social welfare system and more general issues. Networking nationally and internationally, in church, state and non-state areas contributed to the provision of such a service in areas neglected by or inaccessible to other bodies, e.g. statutory/ consular. It was involved in public relations work and education. This involved the preparation of annual reports, press conferences, distributing greeting cards and newsletters. Its work was confined mainly to individual cases. It viewed itself as 'reasonably successful' in relation to providing information and public relations, and believed: 'it helped to sensitise Church personnel and the broader community to issues pertinent to prisoners and their families'.[45] It recognized a need to improve PR work within the Church to counteract what it perceived as ambivalence towardsthe ICPO. However, it judged itself as moderately successful in providing accurate information to groups—to clergy, politicians, public campaigns, solicitors and information offices.[46] It noted that prisoners, their families, voluntary and statutory agencies accepted thatICPO provided a necessary service—as seen by the number of referrals.[47] ICPO's ability to perform was affected by poor premises and lack of office help. It was challenged operationally by constraints regarding computerization and the preparation of information leaflets and accessing legal information. While recognizing the need for project work with ex-prisoners, it was unable to act on it. AIDS and women in prison were other growing issues, but little could be done at the time. In its 1988 review,ICPO noted that extradition had become an issue with an increasednumber of cases on files.[48] Poor conditions, lack of justice and the PTA all caused concern toICPO. It was the first to

raise strip-searching as a serious issue. The significance of the issues grew as the prospect of justice grew less likely in the Maguire Seven, Guildford Four and Birmingham Six cases, and as the role of the Irish government in protecting the interests of emigrants weakened.

Miscarriages of Justice

The Guildford pub bombings occurred on 5 October 1974. Four soldiers and one civilian were killed, and a further sixty-five were wounded. The Guildford Four—Gerry Conlon, Paul Hill, Paddy Armstrong and Carol Richardson were wrongly convicted of the bombings.[49] The Maguire Seven—Annie and her husband Patrick, their sons Patrick and Vincent, Patrick O'Neill, a family friend, Sean Smyth, Annie's brother and her brother-in-law, Giuseppe Conlon, were convicted of handling explosives found during the investigation into the bombings.[50] Both groups' convictions were eventually declared 'incorrect and unsatisfactory' and reversed in 1989 and 1991 respectively after they had served 15–16 years in prison.[51] The Birmingham Six—Hugh Callaghan, Patrick Joseph Hill, Gerard Hunter, Richard McIlkenny, William Power and John Walker, had lived in Birmingham for several years prior to 1975 when they were sentenced to life imprisonment for the Birmingham pub bombings which took place on 21 November 1974. Twenty-one people were killed and 182 people were injured. A third device, failed to detonate. After along anddifficult campaign their convictions were declared unsafe and unsatisfactory and quashed by the Court of Appeal on 14 March 1991.[52] In an interview for this book in 2007, Bobby Gilmore described the strategic approach ofICPO in relation to the various campaigns concerned with miscarriages of justice:

> I was getting a lot of pressure that these people were in prison. Donal Spring and I approached John MacEntee requesting he put a flyer in the *Irish Press* to advertise a Birmingham Six meeting. We met with Robert Kee, Paul May and others and decided to target four separate groups: the media, churches, government, trade unions and other organizations. We got the energy into four main areas where we needed movement. We would have

> someone monitoring the emerging situation. They were shrewd strategists. We would look up parliamentary procedures for the next period, get someone to raise a question regarding human rights at international meetings—the Birmingham Six—every place people went they would have someone to ask a question regarding human rights. Politicians loved to talk about human rights.[53]

ICPO identified itself as being the only group to link three sets of cases, to maintain contact with families and prisoners and to set up a relatives' group. It facilitated meetings with government and campaign groups. It had an important role to play in internationalizing the issue and observing trials. In the 1988 review, ICPO stated: 'Outlook on these cases is bleak—the Maguire case doesn't seem at all hopeful.'[54] ICPO strongly stated: 'the Guildford Four need to be released' and that to achieve this, 'international pressure is vital'.[55] ICPO stressed it had 'performed a role to date that no other group was/is in a position to do either locally or internationally'.[56] It questioned how this role could be further developed, and recognized the need for back-up. It acknowledged that: 'work on these cases has wider implications, for other prisoners, potential emigrants, PTA arrests, detentions and convictions'.[57] In the review, ICPO stressed that there was a need to build momentum and asked how, as an organization, it could be most effective.

During this period, ICPO plans were curtailed by a lack of government support, and by the need to respond to the cases of the Birmingham Six, Guildford Four, Maguire Seven and Winchester Three, as the momentum grew for their exoneration and release. ICPO's work contributed to this in 1985, when it invited Annie Maguire to speak to people in Ireland about her case on her release, out of which various campaign groups grew. Annie Maguire has publicly thanked Bobby Gilmore and Nuala Kelly for their part in her release.[58]

IECE archival material demonstrates that those working in ICPO had excellent networking skills and were skilled strategists, as demonstrated, for example, in a report on an ICPO trip to the US in relation to the cases of the Birmingham Six, Guildford Four and

Maguire Seven, in October 1987.[59] Nuala Kelly met with the Office of International Justice and Peace, US Catholic Conference. Together with Paddy McIlkenny, brother of Richard, one of the Birmingham Six, she met with Monsignor James J Murray, Executive Director of New York's Catholic Charities. Monsignor Murray guaranteed he would ask Cardinal O'Connor to write an article for *Catholic New York* in the hope that mainstream media would pick up the story, as they had done with the Joseph Doherty case.[60] Cardinal O' Connor wrote to Tom King and Charlie Haughey. Monsignor Murray agreed to attend the Court of Appeal on 4 November 1987 with a journalist who would write an article on his return to the US. Cardinal O'Connor sent a telegram to Margaret Thatcher on 31 October (with copies to Cardinals Hume and Ó Fiaich and Bishop Daly of Derry).[61] Monsignor Murray was a lawyer prior to becoming a priest and was asked by Cardinal O'Connor to represent him as an observer at the appeal as a result of a request from the Prelates of Ireland and England that someone from the New York Archdiocese would join the group of official observers at the Old Bailey. Referring to judges who had dealt with the case at earlier hearings, Monsignor Murray wrote that it read like a *Who's Who?*of the British legal establishment and stated: 'To reverse the decisions of such an array of eminent judges would be one of the greatest upheavals in modern legal history in England'.[62] ICPO was instrumental in achieving such an upheaval.

On 5 October 1988, ICPO released a press statement. The organization undertook to send observers to the trial of the Winchester Three. Bobby Gilmore, having observed the Appeal Court hearing of the Birmingham Six, as well as other conspiracy charges against Irish people, wrote: 'the possibility of justice for Irish people in Britain at present, is growing more remote.'[63] ICPO was worried that the dramatic arrest and subsequent media coverage in this case had already prejudiced the trial. It was also worried about the unacceptably long delays before bringing defendants to trial and their detention 'in sub-human conditions'.[64] It stated: '… lawyers fear that they (the defendants) will not be in a physical and mental condition to defend themselves properly, the nature of charges, flimsy evidence, or indeed lack of evidence, can be sufficient to gain convictions on

vague conspiracy charges whereas with other charges, a trial could not proceed'.[65] It welcomed the presence of official observers from the Irish government, stating:

> Now there is a greater need than ever to protect the rights of our Irish citizens in Britain, particularly at a time when ordinary Irish people with an impeccable belief in justice and peace are growing more sceptical about the likelihood of being treated with impartiality and fairness in Britain.[66]

On 31 January 1988, ICPO held a one-day review at which P J Byrne and Nuala Kelly reported on their attendance at the Old Bailey on 28 January 1988 at the announcement of the Birmingham Six case. The negative decision in the case indicated the need for ICPO's services, as had clearly been the case four years earlier: 'The decision highlighted the severe shortcomings of quiet diplomacy and threw up the related needs for more information and an injection of moral passion into the issue.'[67] It outlined its priorities for the next five years, and on a day-to-day basis, the need for contact involved counselling, listening and casework with families and prisoners.

The demand for ICPO services at that time was greater than had been anticipated. Casework had to be maintained (but not to the exclusion of other work). Information on prison and welfare systems was viewed as vital, as was work with relatives; PR with Church and miscarriage of justice cases were also priorities. The ICPO judged its role as important insofar as it had a different access to authority than other groups: 'ICPO in itself has a certain authority which could be used to access and move certain things.'[68] Its tasks included: campaigning, facilitating meetingsand writing to the government expressing extreme concern. It suggested the government needed to think of new approaches and be more forthright in explaining the case abroad. It continued to highlight its concern regarding extradition. ICPO was to hold a watching brief on the PTA, and return to it when feasible. Repatriation remained an issue central to ICPO work. The issues identified as crucial were: extradition, liaising with anti-extradition committees, maintaining a watching brief on strip-searching and working on it as cases arose. To

draw up a proposal regarding ex-prisoners by the end of the year was also a priority.[69]

In February 1988, at 35 Harcourt Street, Dublin, ICPO facilitated a working meeting of interested individuals and groups involved in work around the miscarriages of justice cases: the Birmingham Six, Guildford Four, Maguire Seven, and Judith Ward cases. Approximately fifty attended the meeting from England, the US and Ireland, which was chaired by Fr Breifne Walker of ICPO. Margaret McIlkenny (daughter of Richard), Billy Hunter (brother of Gerry) and Annie Maguire each spoke. They talked of the need for the campaigns to develop and expand. They highlighted the need for hope and co-operation on all cases, as well as the need for individual campaigns. They were optimistic about the Birmingham Six case but they called on people to do even more. Annie Maguire spoke of the need to look for freedom with justice and the need to secure releases plus the clearing of names. Paul May of the London Birmingham Six Group, Fr Joe Taffe and Noel Spencer of the Birmingham and Bolton/Manchester-based groups reported on their work. Paul May stressed that 'if mechanisms do not exist to release innocent people they should be introduced'.[70] It was agreed that members of the European Parliament needed to be targeted by the campaigns. FrTaffe reported difficulties in organizing a campaign in Birmingham because of the centrality of the cases to the region. However, a strong group backed by the Birmingham Trades Council had formed and it was hoped this would broaden further. Regarding the US, a contribution from Peter King (a US attorney interested in the case) pointed out that the cases drew support from the wholeIrish-American community. He said it was vital to send key people: 'lawyers, Church figures or people of social, political or legal prominence, as they would gain quicker access to the media'.[71] He said there was no evidence of Irish government interest in the US, arguing that if it existed, Senators Moynihan and Kennedy would have spoken.[72] He referred to a need for the Irish government and clergy to convey their concern to their US counterparts.[73] He suggested the impending Congressional Hearing regarding aid for the Six Counties could be targeted, highlighting the unacceptability of extradition in the present context.[74] Fr Bobby Gilmore stated:

> The Irish in Britain are a migrant community and therefore, an insecure one. Because of this, there is an inbuilt inability to express its migrant concerns collectively. In order to do this, it needs the confidence from the people at home to support the work being done in England. To enable the Embassy to raise the cases further, there is a need for pressure from Ireland, and a related need to raise the case from an emotional one to an issue based level. We shouldn't apologize for putting pressure on institutions which should be doing that work.[75]

It was noted by Michael P Quinlan in the *Irish Echo,* on 5 March 1988, that the Anglo-Irish Treaty was the biggest loser from the denial of a new trial to the Birmingham Six, even though it should have been a vehicle leading to middle ground. Quinlan said:

> The Anglo-Irish Treaty signed in 1985 was intended to create a climate whereby the British would be receptive to Irish input on issues where both Governments had a stake. The climate, from the Irish standpoint, has never been achieved. Instead, the British Government has been inflexible on the important issues, including fair employment policies, extradition, the shoot-to-kill case, and now the Birmingham Six.[76]

Observers worldwide viewed the hearings as a test of Britain's capacity to correct its judicial system, not just in the interests of fairness, but in terms of self-interest of improving Anglo-Irish relations and its own reputation in the world community. Quinlan quotes Boston Mayor, Ray Flynn in referring to: 'A perpetuation of an outrage that can only serve to blot the name of Britain and its judicial system. It should be quite evident to all that Britain's institutional violence against Irish people reaches right into the heart of its own judiciary.'[77] Nuala Kelly spent a week in London as an observer at the Court of Appeal hearings, and was welcomed by prisoners and their relatives. Members of the Chaplaincy scheme also attended.

A meeting took place in Knock, on 24 July 1988, between Cardinal O'Connor, Archbishop of New York, and relatives of the Birmingham

Six, Guildford Four and Maguire Seven.[78] As a result of the emotional ninety minute meeting, it was agreed that the Cardinal would raise the issue with President Reagan before the end of his presidential term and ask him to assert himself more vigorously with Britain. During his pilgrimage, Cardinal O'Connor would also raise the cases with key figures in Ireland, using whatever bargaining points were at his disposal. There was a need to increase the level of awareness about the cases in the US, particularly about the Guildford Four. The Episcopal Conference in the US needed to get involved, but this would involve an approach from the Irish Church first. It was suggested that a formal request from the Irish Episcopal Conference should be made to its US equivalent asking it to get involved and it was noted that it would be very significant if the British bishops were to join with the Irish Hierarchy in making the request.[79]

ICPO never tired in its mission. At a meeting of the IECE on 23 November 1989, ICPO welcomed the statement of the Episcopal Conference calling for a review of the case of the Birmingham Six and action in the case of the Maguire Family.[80] In its report to IECE, on 22 January 1990, it indicated that miscarriage of justice work played a central role in a week of events held by ICPO before Christmas.[81] The aim was to celebrate the release of the Guildford Four and step up the campaign for the Birmingham Six. It involved the Co-ordinator and other members of ICPO working with the campaign groups in England and Ireland, as well as alongside the Trade Union Movement, Church and legal groups. ICPOorganized the distribution of candles, a mass in Dublin's Pro-Cathedral, a Trade Union public meeting and a parade.

The Parade of Innocence was a carnival-style pageant held in Dublin in December 1989. It was a welcome-home celebration for the Guildford Four and a call for justice for the Birmingham Six. Over 300 costumed actors led a 10,000-strong candlelit procession through Dublin. The parade was led by a large sculptor, a Bird of Freedom figure, surrounded by six white swans carried aloft. They were followed by policemen (actors) in riot gear, beating rhythms on shields decorated with 1970s-headlines from British tabloid newspapers. A judge was seated on a throne made of rubbish, followed by two cages, one which held ten silent prisoners. As the parade made its way through Dublin,

famous and comic figures randomly arrested actors dressed as police constables. A percussion and brass orchestra paraded and beat out a rhythm and a group sang a song composed for the event. A forty-foot boat made of newspaper headlines was set alight on the Liffey. The entire route was decorated with banners and the top three floors of Liberty Hall were lit up with a 'Free the Innocent' sign. Outside the Central Bank as Bobby Gilmore, Bernadette McAliskey, Paul Hill and Gerry Conlon addressed the crowds,the Bird of Freedom was released.[82] In 2010, remembering the event, Nuala Kelly recalled how it had been an important initiative in bringing artists and community activist together on one campaign.[83] This event was followed, on 31 March 1990 by worldwide vigils and pickets which were held at British embassies and in public places in over fifty cities as part of Worldwide Action for the Birmingham Six and other miscarriages of Justice Cases.

ICPO was instrumental in getting the Birmingham Six case on the agenda of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, via the Irish delegation at the last session of the assembly on 28 January 1991. ICPO was represented at the Birmingham Six appeal hearing on 25 February 1991 and it urged international groups to send observers. Fr Gilmore reported on a strong Church presence in the Birmingham Six Court of Appeal trial with at least one chaplain present every day.[84] He was troubled that there would be no one available to witness the case of Martina Shanahan, one of the Winchester Three. He referred to reports by a West Midlands Research group that 125 people a day were held for up to one hour under the PTA.[85] On 14 March 1991,the Birmingham Six cases were quashed. The then Home Secretary announced the establishment of a Royal Commission on Criminal Justice to be chaired by Viscount Runciman of Doxfordfollowing the verdicts. The establishment of such a commission was in response to growing concern about a succession of miscarriages of justice which had undermined public confidence; in announcing its formation, the Home Secretary specifically referred to the Birmingham Six case. The Royal Commission was charged with examining the effectiveness of the criminal justice system in securing the convictions of the guilty and the acquittal of the innocent. The Royal Commission's report was presented to Parliament in July 1993. It recommended the establishment of an

independent body to: consider suspected miscarriages of justice; to arrange for their investigation where appropriate andto refer cases to the Court of Appeal where matters needed further consideration.[86] The Criminal Appeal Act 1995 was subsequently passed, enabling the establishment of the Criminal Cases Review Commission as an executive Non-Departmental Public Body.

Report on the Transfer of Prisoners

Repatriation of prisoners, in order for them to be nearer to their families, has beenan issue of primary concern to ICPO since its foundation. Prisoners were continuously writing to ask for information on the Council of Europe Treaty on the Transfer of Sentenced Prisoners.[87] ICPOrecognized a need to pressurize the Irish government to ratify the Treaty which was vital for families and all long-term prisoners. It launched a report on repatriation at a Seminar on Transfer of Sentenced Prisoners on 29 January 1989. The report was launched simultaneously in Dublin, where Bishop Casey was the main speaker, and in London by Lord Hylton. It was estimated that less than forty people would apply for transfer and that the number would decrease over time. It was hoped that the report would:

> Contribute to a change of perspective by both the British and Irish governments to alter their policies governing the relocation of prisoners from Great Britain to Northern Ireland and the repatriation of Irish prisoners from abroad. The former could be affected by administrative rather than legislative changes by the British government in adhering to the spirit of its own prison rules. The latter would require that the Irish government ratify the Council of Europe Convention on the Transfer of Sentenced Prisoners to which they have clearly given a commitment by signing, and then introduce the necessary enabling legislation to fulfil the government's responsibility under this Treaty. If there is no change over the next two years it is the intention to raise these issues at a major Human Rights Conference to be held in Moscow in 1991.[88]

In February 1989, with the Committee on the Administration of Justice, the National Association of Probation Officers and NACRO (the Northern Ireland Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders), ICPOorganized a seminar on the transfer of sentenced prisoners. It sought to provide an opportunity for concerned organizations and individuals to share views and experiences on issues relating to the position of prisoners in Britain and other countries who wished to transfer to prisons in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. The seminar was held at the ATGWU (Allied Trade and General Workers Union) Hall in Dublin. The contributors were:Mary McAleese, former Professor of Criminal Law, TCD (Trinity College Dublin) and then Director of the Institute of Professional Legal Studies, Belfast;Lord Hylton,President of NACRO and campaigner for transfer of prisoners; Stephen Livingston, Lecturer in Law at QUB (Queen's University Belfast) and Chair of the Committee on the Administration of Justice; Nuala Kelly, Co-ordinator of ICPO and Ian Baker, Trustee of Prisoners Abroad.[89]

The seminar highlighted the situation of families who had difficulties in trying to maintain contact with relatives far away, usually in high-security prisons. The issue was presented as a humanitarian one. Families encountered many difficulties, including expense and time spent travelling to prison locations, finding accommodation, marriage difficulties, and (in some cases) problems with foreign travel.[90] ICPO had made several representations to the Irish government to sign and ratify the Council of Europe Treaty on the Transfer of Sentenced Prisoners in the interests of family unity and proper rehabilitation of prisoners. ICPO had letters written by the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Home Office refusing repatriation because the Treaty had not been ratified. ICPO called on the Irish government to ratify the Treaty on the Transfer immediately and to ensure proper assistance for families needing to travel abroad to visit prisoners.[91] This would include help in the proper arrangements for visits, as well as financial assistance; additionally, it would involve urging the British government to commit to transferring those Irish prisoners in Britain who sought transfer to Northern Ireland.

The Council of Europe Convention on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons was ratified by Ireland following the passing of the Transfer

of Sentenced Prisoners Act 1995 and came into effect on 1 November 1995. The Transfer of Sentenced Prisoners Acts 1995 and 1997 provide for the transfer of persons into or out of the State in order for them to serve their sentences. Prisoners returning to Ireland under this legislation serve their sentences under Irish law and practices. Supervision by the Probation and Welfare Service on temporary release is an option available to the Minister for Justice as part of resettlement planning towards the end of sentence. A report to the Houses of the Oireachtas on the operation of the Transfer of Sentenced Prisoners Acts 1995 and 1997 is published annually by the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform.[92]

ICPO Draft Development Plan 1991-1995

ICPO was constantly evolving in line with issues as they arose and in monitoring, evaluating and planning. Between 1985 and 1991 ICPO held three reviews, and conducted forward planning days in 1988, 1989 and 1990, in an effort to write a corporate four-year plan.[93] It viewed its work in the context of the growing complexity of the political and other issues affecting migrants in the 1990s, not only in Europe, but also further afield. It identified a need to develop greater understanding of these issues and to reflect on the most effective and appropriate role for a Church agency in promoting human rights and in the provision of a direct service to families and prisoners.[94] Documents from the IECE archives record how Bobby Gilmore outlined various concerns relating to the needs and problems of emigrants, migrants and refugees which were raised at a European conference he had attended.[95] He was concerned 'that draconian laws would be used to curtail the lives of immigrants in a future Europe'.[96] He recommended that ICPO 'should monitor trends and network with other comparable agencies to ensure that national and international declarations were effective in the protection of immigrants, migrants and refugees'.[97] ICPO recognized that, even though statistically emigration had declined between 1990 and 1991, 'there is no reason for complacency' and indeed, 'the nature of these cases is proving to be increasingly complicated and difficult'.[98]

In August 1991, Nuala Kelly and P J Byrne presented a draft development plan to members of ICPO management committee. It outlined ten objectives for ICPO for the next four years which would see the organization through to the end of its first decade in existence.[99] It identified as key areas: casework service for prisoners and families; issues arising out of work to date, including management and administration; anticipating what needed to be done nationally and internationally in the area of human rights in relation to emigrant and refugee issues and the Church's response to same.[100] The plan pledged that ICPO would continue to provide and develop a personal service for Irish prisoners overseas and their families, while at the same time challenging statutory and voluntary agencies in the provision of necessary support structures.[101] It was striving to achieve a satisfactory balance between its ability to respond flexibly to immediate needs whilst, at the same time, working on a planned basis.

In the early years, ICPO was involved in social, legal, academic, penal, information and human rights work. In 1991, planning its future work, it recognized its choice seemed to be between continuing in a broad fashion in this way or specializing in certain areas, for example, penal reform, as opposed to criminal justice/international human rights work. Recognizing that, although the two overlap considerably, an agency with limited resources providing a basic casework service must choose a path of development which would work towards improving the service, ICPO stated: 'this must be the axis of choice in our current deliberations'.[102] It decided that now that its work had been established, it needed more cross-border co-operation, rural and regional networks (especially in the local Church), more ICPO publications and that it needed to undertake more international work.[103] It outlined its objectives for the period 1991-1995:to consolidate the professional nature of the service for Irish prisoners throughout the world and their families in Ireland, regardless of faith or offence; to sensitize the Church and other sectors of Irish life to the needs of prisoners abroad and their families in Ireland; to promote greater awareness of ICPO's broader work and issues concerning prisoners overseas and to support and encourage positive change for the reform of criminal justice systems internationally.[104] While the resolution of the Birmingham Six and

Guildford Four cases had changed the climate and created possibilities for change in Ireland as well as England, ICPO'swork in this regard was far from finished. It continued to comment on and criticize the inadequacies that remained, and promoted greater diligence in the protection of rights of emigrants.[105]

In her 1992 co-ordinator's report, Nuala Kelly outlined ICPO's continuing casework with families dealing with such challenging issues as deaths of members of prisoners' families and suicide.[106] Family visits continued, as did work on the miscarriage of justice, transfer of prisoners and attendance at international conferences. Artist, Robert Ballagh, was involved in organizing an art competition to highlight the services for prisoners and to raise the profile of ICPO. In its review meeting on 14 June 1992, it called for more information on drugs as the number of drugs-related cases on its files had increased. Issues arising included: detoxification in prisons; women as couriers; lengths of sentences; aftercare facilities; fines; effect on transfer; role of the Department of Foreign Affairs (how they profile prisoners and outcome) and the effect of the Maastricht Treaty on these issues.[107] It indicated that:

> Ireland has experience of mobility of labour in relation to Ireland/England. We should look at various migrant charters and comment now on matters relevant to prisoners. So that we can be alerted to, and alert others to developments in Europe and having agreed these, perhaps in conjunction with Commission for Justice and Peace set up a panel or working party on human rights.[108]

At the February 1993 management meeting, it was noted that ICPO had been contacted by the Committee for the Prevention of Torture for information regarding Irish prisons.[109] In March 1993, it recorded its work as including assisting a prisoner whose children were killed tragically, organizing counselling for ex-prisoners, contact with families of those recently arrested under the PTA and organizing pen friends for prisoners.[110] It was involved with the Beechmont Five Campaign Group,[111] and articles on ICPO had been submitted to the magazine

Reality.[112] In June 1993, President Mary Robinson agreed to present the prizes for the art competition.

The Rodney Rice programme on RTÉ did a piece on the transfer of prisoners in an effort to increase awareness of the issue.[113] The COMECE (Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Community)asked ICPO for a briefing on prisoners overseas in the 'New Europe', with a view to raising their stories with Jacques Delors in November 1993.[114] Andrea Bjorkland, a student from Yale Law School, spent two internship months with ICPO and completed the necessary research and redrafting of the Bill of Transfer. Despite various approaches, ICPO failed to achieve a meeting with the Minister for Justice, but they met with Minister of State, Willie O'Dea, and with the civil servant responsible for prisoners. O'Dea promised to ensure that the Minister would make the transfer of prisoners a priority, agreeing that numbers were small and the legislation relatively simple and not contentious.[115] ICPO stated in its report to IECE: 'We are seriously embarrassed that the Irish government is the only main EC country not to ratify. Can the Bishops lend their support on this?'[116] ICPO continued to highlight the importance of this issue and to campaign until it achieved its goal and the Transfer of Prisoners Act came into effect on 1 November 1995.

Having dealt remarkably successfully with the huge challenges of miscarriages of justice and repatriation, as the twentieth century drew to a close,ICPO was able to focus on important issues such as re-settlement, accommodation, peer support and family networking. The future of ICPO was to unfold in a very different political climate to earlier years. The peace process had resolved many issues in Northern Ireland and for the Irish in Britain, and the Irish government recognized prisoners abroad as a group with specific needs.

New Beginnings

In 2003, ICPO moved from its premises at Parnell Square, Dublin, to the Columba Centre at Maynooth. This was part of a planned strategy to restructure and relocate the Bishops' Commissions and Agencies. This had followed a turbulent period for ICPO, as many of

its members argued very strongly that it ought to be based in central Dublin to ensure accessibility for prisoners and their families. ICPO had presented alternatives such as retaining ICPO as an outlet of the IECE, seeking sponsorship from a Church group, independence with some Church funds and, most drastically, the official closure of the service. The Probation and Welfare Service offered ICPO a large grant to set up as a limited company. The move proved an important watershed for ICPO personnel and a difficult and sad time for many of its members. As a result of the move, the entire staff stood down.[117]

Gráinne Prior, who took up her position just before the relocation, continued to work with ICPO and with secretarial support from Marie Purcell and Hilary O'Connell of the Columba Centre, she accepted the challenge of re-igniting the flame of ICPO. Gráinne Prior worked tirelessly for several years with the support of the IECE and Fr Alan Hilliard and the dedication of the very experienced Sr Agnes and other volunteers. She explained to me that she was'dedicated to improving the level of service', guided by principles found in the Gospel: 'pursuing love, justice and truth, accompaniment, dignity, respect and participation'.[118]

The Irish office of ICPO reopened at the end of June. This followed a three month period during which allservices from the Irish office wereon hold. The London branch of ICPO, under Director, Fr Gerry McFlynn and Administrator, Carmel Murphy remained unchanged. The move was viewed as disadvantageous in terms of ease of access for the families of prisoners. However, the new location in the Columba Centre was viewed as advantageous in terms of facilitating collaborative working with other agencies.[119]

In 2003, the Director of the London office came to the fore, highlighting issues of special significance to Irish prisoners in the UK such as the deaths of Irish prisoners in Brixton. He participated in many media interviews, debates and meetings. The need for an emergency fund to meet the basic needs of prisoners in certain circumstances was identified by ICPO and personnel from various embassies and chaplaincies. In 2003, this fund was set up; the Southern Province of the Sisters of Mercy donated €2,000 to the fund alongside the St Stephens Green Trust which donated €1,000.[120]

In the same year, ICPO continued campaigning and networking. As a member of the network of organizations operating as the EGPA (European Group of Prisoners Abroad), ICPO attended a conference in Brussels entitled 'European Citizens in prison abroad—why should we care?' The conference was the culmination of a fifteen month projectfinanced by the European Union through its Grotius fund with the express aim of strengthening and developing the services available to European citizens in prisons away from their home country. The activities undertaken with this funding enabled EGPA to extend the network. The conference provided an opportunity for delegates to meet and exchange ideas, information and experience. In addition, this Grotius project led to the publication of a Good Practice Guide and an accessible and useful website.[121]

Twentieth Anniversary of ICPO

In November 2005, ICPO marked its twentieth anniversary with a conference in Dublin entitled 'Doing Time: Prisoners Overseas and their Families'. The results of *Separated Families: Reviewing the needs of the Families of Irish Prisoners Overseas*, a survey commissioned by ICPO, were made public and received considerable media attention.[122] The findings and recommendations from the study and conference underlined the importance of the outreach work of ICPO and also provided a checklist against which it could assess its own services and plan for the future. It was hoped that these would be of benefit in the formation of government policy regarding prisoners overseas and related issues. Several newspapers ran articles on these and related subjects. There were radio interviews with staff of ICPO. The publicity raised the public profile of ICPO and resulted in a number of new families getting in touch.[123] A spin-off from the conference was a request from 3R Productions to interview the family of an overseas prisoner. ICPO facilitated this and the interview was broadcast on local radio stations in the run up to Christmas.[124] Media attention given to the continued detention of an Irish national in Ecuador included a number of radio interviews with ICPO.[125] All of this helped to keep the issue of prisoners abroad in the public domain.

In the same period, the number of inmates in receipt of letters threatening deportation continued to rise. During 2005, sixty-seven Irish nationals contacted the London office regarding deportation issues—twenty-six of these were deported.[126] This issue had become more prominent and was being fully monitored by ICPO which highlighted the fact that there was still a considerable amount of ignorance and confusion over the whole issue of deportation with many prisoners confused between straightforward Home Office deportation and the Early Release Scheme.

An interesting initiative of ICPO was its involvement in the 2005 Listowel Writers'Festival for which it initiated and facilitated entries from overseas. In conjunction with the Festival Committee and the Education Section of the Irish Prison Service it providedan opportunity to link Irish prisoners with mainstream life in Ireland. Entry to the competition had been open to Irish prisoners for twenty of the previous thirty five years but entries had not been accepted from Irish prisoners overseas up to that point. An Irish national in prison overseas won the first prize in the poetry section of the Prison Writing Competitionand Joanna Keane O Flynn and Eilís Wren, two members of the organizing committee, accompanied by Fr Gerry McFlynn, travelled to the Isle of Wight and presented the award.[127]

ICPO gave a presentation to the Human Rights Sub Committee of the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs on the issues affecting prisoners overseas and their families. It was broadcast on Oireachtas Report and all the daily newspapers carried it the following day.[128] Two items in particular were highlighted: the need for prisoners overseas to receive an allowance from the Irish government and the need to address the quiet desperation endured by Irish prisoners in UK prisons.[129] Following the submission, members of the committee asked a wide range of questions and made comments on the issues raised. Deportation and repatriation were central issues, as was the financial hardship suffered by families responsible for keeping their relatives in funds so as to cover their basic needs, as well the costs they incurred associated with prison visits. The points raised were all acceptedby the committee. In October, ICPO attended to hear the response, delivered by Mr Dick Roche, who stood in for the Minister for Foreign Affairs,

Mr Ahern. Mr Roche announced the establishment of a study of the needs of Irish Prisoners and their families to be undertaken by Mr Chris Flood; a commitment had been made to this in the programme for government. There was a furtherrecommendation from the Task Force on policy regarding emigrants.[130]

Report on Irish Prisoners Abroad

The Report on Irish Prisoners Abroad (Flood Report)[131] was a direct result of the research commissioned by the IECE *Emigration and Emigrant Services: Research Project and Strategic Plan for 1998-2010*[132](Harvey Report). As a consequence of that research, the Task Force on Emigrants was established in 2001 and, following the publication of its report,[133] a research study on prisoners abroad was established. This had been part of the commitment in the social partnership agreement,*Progress, Prosperity and Fairness.*[134] Following its publication, Fr Alan Hilliard described it as 'kin to your wish list'.[135] Within the report, Chris Flood stated:

> I was conscious of the outstanding role that ICPO plays in regard to overseas prisoners. This country has a long and honourable tradition. It is my view that while the State has primary responsibility for looking after the welfare of our citizens imprisoned abroad, this should be carried out in partnership with NGOs, especially ICPO.[136]

The Report's recommendations reflected the campaigns and strategies spearheaded by ICPO since 1985. It called for: a need to ensure best international practice is employed by the Department of Foreign Affairs; a need to establish a new unit within the Department of Foreign Affairs dedicated to the consular needs of Prisoners; with its own staff it would be headed by a senior person to oversee prisoner welfare matters and keep up with international developments in the area; the Unit's approach should correspond to the best in the world; a register of Prisoners Abroad should be established; every prisoner overseas has a right to a consular visit at least once a year; prisoners

should be visited as soon as possible after arrest; embassies should pursue automatic notification of consular staff particular on conviction and arrival in a prison facility.[137]

Nearly thirty years of quiet, humane, support work, campaigning and political engagement have led to a huge change in the situation of Irish prisoners both in the UK and elsewhere in the world. IECE established ICPO at a difficult time and with a group of individuals whose plight does not obviously inspire sympathy. Of all the groups and organizations which have grown out of the work of the IECE, ICPO embodies a concept of Christian charity more powerfully than any other.

NOTES

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9

The Task Force on Emigration

As the Irish Chaplaincy worked hard to support the spiritual and practical needs of the Irish people in Britain, its workhad also led it to become the voice of Irish migrants in Ireland itself. The energetic role played by the ICPO in lobbying for Irish prisoners abroad represents only a fraction of the IECE's political activity in Ireland culminating with the Task Force on Emigration, the establishment of the Irish Abroad Unit and a guarantee of secure long-term funding. The personnel of the Chaplaincy and the Bishops and Cardinals involved have never wavered in their belief that the Irish government should take responsibility for its own people: the Irish abroad.

Even when considering the years leading up to the creation of the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy, there was a strong perception that the Irish government was wrong to wash its hands of migrants or, even worse, panic over them. One article in the *Irish Post* in 1984 showed a photograph of Eamon de Valera in conversation with Cardinal Griffin at the annual St Patrick's Day dinner at the National University of Ireland Club. The photograph had been taken in 1949 or 1950, when de Valera was out of office for the first time since 1932.[1] The article stated:

> For the purpose of historical accuracy, it needs to be stated that Dev's rapport with the Irish in Britain was extended only during those years, from 1948-1951 when he was out of office.

> During World War II, his government had facilitated in every way Irish emigration to Britain and the joining of the British armed forces by Irish people. The travel permits required for travel to Britain at that time were issued at Garda stations. In recent years it has come to light that Dev and his ministers became most concerned towards the end of the war at what might be the effects of the huge numbers of war veterans returning to the twenty-six counties when the conflict ended. Might not the scores of thousands of these young men, trained in arms, and, perhaps, touched by socialist thoughts be a threat to the stability of the state? And what if they were joined in coming home by the equally numerous non-combatant but newly-skilled Irish who had been in Britain during the War? A paper was prepared on what might have to be done to contend with the situation.[2]

This perceived lack of political interest in finding solutions and engaging with issues was to endure for another half a century and it was something the IECE and Irish Chaplaincy challenged with incredible fervour. Ferriter acknowledges the role of Cardinal Griffin, Archbishop of Westminster, who he describes as 'particularly active.'[3] He refers to 'a frequent denial that the state had any responsibility for the economic, spiritual or social welfare of Irish citizens abroad, with the burden of responsibility often left to both Irish and English ecclesiastical authorities, who oversaw the opening of Catholic hostels and mission schemes to ensure emigrants fulfilled their religious obligations.[4]

In order to pursue its aims, the Chaplaincy doggedly sought financial support from a wide range of sources—through church collections, golf classics, private donations, foundations, initiatives with B&I Ferries and the Bank of Ireland. At national and international level it sought funding where appropriate. The effort involved in this constant lobbying is very evident in the documents in the Irish Emigrant Council's archives. There are records of letters written, applications completed and meetings held, over several decades. Eventually the dedication and tenacity paid off. In 2002, the Task Force on Policy Regarding Emigrantspublished its report,[5] which was a direct result

of the lobbying and campaigning work done by those involved in the Irish Chaplaincy Scheme over decades.

The Task Force Report

One of the greatest acknowledgments of the work of the Irish Chaplaincy is that presented in the *Task Force on Policy Regarding Emigrants*, which states:

> The commitment in the PPF (Programme for Prosperity and Fairness) was based on a recommendation in a Report commissioned by the Irish Episcopal Commission for Emigrants and the Irish Commission for Prisoners Overseas in 1999. The Harvey Report assessed the current pattern of Irish emigration; reviewed the policy responses and services provided by the Government, the Catholic Church and other voluntary organisations; and set out the main policy challenges that would arise over the ten-year period ahead. It concluded that there was need for a government commitment to a partnership approach to the subject of emigration and to the development of a coherent and effective policy, funding and service infrastructure. The Report recommended that the government "establish a time-limited Task Force, co-ordinated by the Department of Foreign Affairs and involving Government Departments, State Agencies and NGOs to develop a coherent long-term policy approach to emigration and the needs of emigrants.[6]

The policy recommendations of the report, which reflect the work carried out by the Irish Chaplaincy since its inception, are to:

- ensure as far as possible that Irish people who emigrate do so voluntarily and on the basis of informed choice and are properly prepared to live independently in different societies;
- protect and support the Irish abroad, particularly those who emigrate involuntarily and those who find themselves marginalized or at risk of social exclusion;

- facilitate the return to Ireland and reintegration into Irish society of emigrants who wish to do so especially the vulnerable and the elderly;
- supportthe Irish abroad who wish to express and share the Irish dimension of their identity.[7]

The action plan to meet these objectives incorporated three main areas: pre-departure services; service to the Irish abroad and service to returning emigrants—all areas in which the Irish Chaplaincy has developed services, as has been shown in this book. It incorporated the solutions the Irish Chaplaincy had sought for decades:

- the allocation to the Department of Foreign Affairs of overall responsibility for policy on emigration and for the co-ordination of support services to emigrants and Irish communities abroad;
- the establishment of a new structure—the Agency for the Irish abroad—under the aegis of the Department for Foreign Affairs to co-ordinate the provision of services for Irish emigrants and Irish communities abroad;
- the appointment of additional staff in the Department of Foreign Affairs, at home and at certain missions overseas, to support the Irish abroad;
- the allocation of additional resources to other departments providing services to Irish emigrants to enable them to improve and develop these services;
- asignificant increase in the level of official funding for emigrant services.

Even though the Task Force Report reflects the ethos and services presented through the decades of the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy, one does not get a true picture of the long decades of lobbying undertaken by the Irish Chaplaincy prior to its publication. It was a lengthy and sustained campaign. Material in the IECE archives illuminates the strident efforts of the Irish Chaplaincy for decades to place responsibility for the welfare of Irish emigrants at the feet of the Irish government. There is evidence of how the Church had, for many

years through initiatives such as the Annual Congress on Emigration, tried to highlight the needs of emigrants. In a resolution as early as 1964 and again in 1967:

> The Emigrant Chaplains express serious concern at the emigration of large numbers of Irish boys and girls under the age of 18, unprepared and without any immediate provision for their social and moral welfare in England, and recommend that a serious effort be made to tackle this problem at every possible level, domestic, civil and ecclesiastical.[8]

Thirty years later, as one of several agencies, IECE looked to the National Anti-Poverty Strategy to acknowledge and respond to the realities of emigration. In September 1995, along with Emigrant Advice, Dublin Diocesan Migration Services and Cork and Kerry Emigrant Support Group, it made a submission to the National Anti-Poverty Strategy.[9] The submission quoted Paul Cullen writing in the *Irish Times*: 'only the Catholic Church has taken a stand against the haemorrhaging of young talent from many communities'.[10] Cullen indicated that 'there is no policy on emigration', referring to Mary Robinson's attempt to raise the issue and 'the deafening silence'.[11] The submission asserted that there are political reasons for this lacuna: mass emigration is an indictment of any governmentand, consequently, is best not talked about. It is difficult for any government to institute educational initiatives which can be perceived as 'educating for the boat'.[12] In commenting on the long-held belief that 'Pre-emigration counselling could be perceived as advertising emigration to "export your problems" and could be perceived by a grieving but voting parent as the main cause of a loss of son or daughter overseas', it suggests:

> If we can overcome the "political blocks" around emigration and link in with an integrated European migration policy then we can certainly have a policy for Ireland. Of course that policy will have to be implemented and that will require clearly set out funding resources being made available.[13]

It set out a solution for policy makers:

> There will be a need too to clearly define the roles of the voluntary bodies and the various statutory bodies and departments. There are budget lines available in the EU for a comprehensive migration programme... There is a framework for such a policy set in a European Union context.[14]

The framework referred to was a document which argued in favour of an integrated and comprehensive immigration and asylum policy with three essential goals:

- the need to exert pressure on the factors which create pressure to migrate;
- the need to 'steer' or 'channel migration';
- the need to develop policies assisting the integration of legal immigrants.[15]

It was perceived that, 'these aims if achieved could really benefit Ireland'.[16]

Fr Paul Byrne acknowledged the difficulties for politicians making policy on emigration, writing in *The Furrow*:

> I know how difficult it is for a government to make policy for emigration. The perceived political wisdom seems to have been that emigration was a vote loser. After all, mass emigration can be seen to be an indictment of any government so the less you remind people about it, the better. There is too, the real dilemma of being seen to be encouraging emigration. If I set up pre-emigration advice centres in prominent sites, advertise their existence, encourage the would-be emigrant to use them, supply him or her with information and contacts for accommodation and jobs abroad, won't I be seen as some sort of pied piper enticing *your* child from home? And here are no votes from that mindset.[17]

He quoted one government minister who said to him: 'We can't be seen to be encouraging emigration'[18] and he asked:

> What cabinet member except for those brief few shamrocky days around March 17th ever goes to bed worrying about emigrants when Ansbacher accounts, deafness bills, overcrowded jails, the peace process and the next bye-election and God knows what else are trying to keep him or her from that same sleep. He identifies one of the problems as being 'it's nobody's primary responsibility…at the heart of my message today is a plea for political will—the political will to forge a policy about emigration/ migration and to implement the necessary consequences of that policy.

> It was, to say the least, disappointing to see the lack of mention of emigration in the National Anti-Poverty Strategy. Isn't it significant that every Department except Tourism and Foreign Affairs are represented in the forging of the Strategy... if the Strategy is dealing with the marginalised who is more marginalised than those driven outside our society altogether...There is no political will to do anything but tinker around the edges of the problem…political will leading to a comprehensive policy and their necessary funding can change all that.[19]

On 17 December 1997, forty years after the foundation of the Irish Chaplaincy Scheme, there was a Senate debate on Emigration. Senator Mooney spoke on funding for immigrant organizations:

> I acknowledge the presence in the Public Gallery of Fr Paul Byrne of the Oblates, to whom I will refer later, who is doing outstanding work in that regard. If he were a Member of this House, he would give us his expertise so we will have to do the best in the circumstances to transmit his views. Many Members on both sides of the House have been briefed by Fr Byrne.[20]

The following year, in 1998, Fr Paul Byrne, OMI, in his capacity as Director of IECE, who had been involved in the issue for over thirty years, was invited to address the *Interdepartmental Committee on Emigration*

on 27 February 1998. He stated: 'For me and what I represent, this is a very important opportunity to speak to a forum which I hope matters.'[21] He reminded his audience that President Mary Robinson had addressed both houses of the Oireachtas on 'Cherishing the Irish Diaspora' and that this request '…was a declaration of the importance of emigration as an issue of "public and national importance"'.[22] He suggested that she was 'not being listened to by the "movers and shakers" of the country'.[23] He quoted Liam Cullen: 'many politicians and commentators felt that the Irish diaspora was not a matter of national importance'.[24] Byrne asked:

> Why is it such a 'non-issue'?...The pattern of emigration has changed recently from a homogeneous group to heterogeneous one—from the young unqualified, unskilled to a more complex group pushed and pulled by very different motivations for leaving.[25]

Emigration and Emigrant Services: Research Project and Strategic Plan for 1998-2010

The IECE and ICPO launched a major research project on emigration to better understand emigration trends, contribute to national policies concerned with emigrants and emigration and help the IECE/ICPO prepare a strategic plan for its own work for 1998-2010:

> The commission now wishes to plan, in a systematic way, the services it plans for Irish emigrants during the period 1998-2010. Rather than let services evolve in an ad hoc way, responding to anecdotal reports of needs or possibly inadequate information and reports on trends, it is much better to anticipate changes in patterns of emigration, understand what services will be needed, foresee what issues are likely to arise and plan what policies will be required. Quality research is the basis for such forward planning. The Commission has already laid out the groundwork for this research and plan.[26]

In summary it stated that emigration is a major form of social exclusion:

> The emigrant, particularly the forced, involuntary emigrant—the vast majority—is excluded from his or her own country and for the most part forgotten by the legislators here. It is one thing to be excluded by poverty by most things in the life of your own country but worse to be excluded from that very country itself. This is exacerbated by an out of sight out of mind attitude, by the total failure of successive governments to evolve any integrated policy on emigration.[27]

It identified the relationship between social exclusion and emigration:

- emigration is caused mainly by poverty and economic necessity;
- poverty is exacerbated by the host country;
- there is no policy to deal with emigration and no real research on statistical information to help with its creation;
- itis possible to have an integrated pan-European policy for migration and one for Ireland.
- The main aims of the latter will be:
  - to prevent all involuntary emigration;
  - to acknowledge that emigration will continue and therefore
  - to provide through an education system, mind sets and skills to enable the would-be emigrant to cope abroad and to maximise his/her potential;
  - to set up a network of counselling and information services for pre-emigration;
  - to support financially and otherwise the agencies helping the Irish abroad, particularly those who are working for the most vulnerable such as prisoners;
  - toenable those who want to be repatriated to return home.[28]

Following the publication of the *Emigration and Services Irish Emigrants: Towards a New Strategic Plan,* Archbishop Michael Neary, Chairman of the Commission, stated:

> I believe that this report challenges not only us but the government and the people of Ireland to consider their response to this

> endemic social issue and to its causes. The shocking statistic for instance, about the Irish in London demands a response not only about services for them but raises the issue of how we can ensure at least minimum levels of human rights for Irish emigrants, refugees or prisoners abroad.[29]

The 1999 Report was instrumental in leading not only to the existence of The Task Force on Emigration chaired by Mr Patrick O'Hanlon, but to the content of its report. In interview, Mr O'Hanlon spoke of the dedication of the priests, particularly Frs Paul Byrne and Alan Hilliard who travelled with him throughout Britain and the US but also in Australia, toshow him first-hand the plight of the Irish abroad.[30] He reminisced about the dedication and enthusiasm of Fr Paul Byrne, no longer a young man, 'living out of a suitcase', striving to achieve justice for Irish emigrants.[31] His stories resonate with Paul Byrne's own account of selling first communion dresses in Birmingham in the Sixties to fund emigrant services there,[32] and Bishop Eamonn Casey's recollection of the faith and confidence he had in Paul Byrne when he passed over the reins of CHAS and SHAC to him in the late 1960s, seeing his potential and ability to take things in a new direction.[33] The subsequent report was launched by Minister Brian Cowen on 28 August 2002, when he said:

> We owe a great debt of gratitude to the Episcopal Commission for Emigrants and to other voluntary agencies for continuing to highlight the importance and needs of our emigrants. The Harvey report, which was commissioned by the Episcopal Commission on Emigrants in 1999, is a most valuable contribution which identifies many of the issues in question.[34]

Paul Byrne summed up his reaction to the publication of the *Task Force on Policy Regarding Emigrants*:

> The document is arguably the most significant contribution in years to a policy on emigration and the funding of services. It is a real acknowledgement of the whole worldwide Diaspora,

> making them part of the nation and providing a blueprint for their comprehensive care.[35]

The report dealt with pre-emigration advice, services to emigrants abroad and those returning to Ireland. Paul Byrne suggested that, 'The most radical recommendation was that a new organization, the Irish Abroad Unit, be established within the Department of Foreign Affairs with the remit of full care of all emigrants.'[36]

The publication of the Task Force Report created more work for Fr Paul Byrne. As no finance was made available in the budget, he wrote to each TD and met with the Secretary General of the Department of Foreign Affairs, Dermot Gallagher, and with Mary Coughlan, Minister for Social and Family Affairs, and requested to speak to the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs. He acknowledged that: 'we got a clause in the new national agreement *Sustaining Progress*:

> Government and the social partners agree on the desirability for the development of a comprehensive policy framework on migration (immigration and emigration). This would incorporate issues which properly fall to Government, acting in accordance with national and international law, including regulation of inflows into the state. It will also incorporate issues on which the Government will consult with the social partners—specifically, economic migration and the labour market, integration issues, racism and interculturalism and issues affecting emigrants. The policy framework will encompass the agreement of the parties to the pay and workplace agreement in relation to work-related aspects arising from the conclusions and recommendations of the Task Force on Emigrants Abroad, a coherent set of initiatives will be developed in consultation with the relevant interests.[37]

Fr Alan Hilliard replaced Fr Paul Byrne as Secretary to the IECE in October 2003. In his first annual report, Alan Hilliard put forward the Constitution and the terms of reference for review in the light of many changes which had occurred since 1989. He stated that the IECE was still awaiting evidence of the government's commitment to

the Task Force recommendations.[38] Several people interviewed for this book, talked about the special skill set Alan Hilliard brought to the Chaplaincy and how necessary it was at that particular time. He was praised for his clear thinking, insistence on an evidence-based approach and his ability to network at all levels, locally and nationally. He also had a vast experience of working with emigrants in Australia and could place the issues in a global context. Furthermore, it was said that he was fearless in confronting the Hierarchy when necessary. By the time Fr Hilliard left the Chaplaincy in 2007, the recommendations of the Task Force had been implemented. In 2004, the Irish Abroad Unit was established. It is a dedicated unit within the Department of Foreign Affairs and coordinates the provision of services to Irish emigrants worldwide,administering financial support to organizations in the voluntary sector engaged in the delivery of services to Irish emigrants. It provides grants to groups in the voluntary sector who provide advice and support to Irish people abroad, particularly those that help migrants access their rights and entitlements in their host countries.

Following the report of the Task Force, government funding for services to emigrants increased significantly. Funding delivered through the Emigrant Support Programme, managed by the Irish Abroad Unit, increased from €2.959m in 2003 to reach a peak of €15.183m in 2008 and 2009.[39] Since then, in line with reductions across the public sector, the allocation has been reduced and the allocation for 2014 stands at €11.595m.[40]

The Irish Abroad Unit in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade was established in 2004 to meet the objectives set out in the Task Force Report to, 'protect and support' the Irish abroad.[41] The Irish Abroad Unit (IAU) manages a range of engagements between the Irish government and the diaspora,including support and recognition for Irish overseas in the form of the Emigrant Support Programme, the Presidential Distinguished Service Awards for the Irish abroad and structured engagement with the diaspora, geared towards economic development through the Global Irish Networkand Global Irish Economic Forum.[42]

The ESP (Emigrant Support Programme) supports cultural, community and heritage projects that foster a vibrant sense of Irish community and identity.In particular, the programme supports

organizations that deliver frontline advisory services and community care to Irish emigrants, including the more vulnerable and marginalized members of thecommunity abroad, such as the elderly and newly-arrived Irish emigrants.In recent years, the programme has also funded capital projects that ensure the long-term future of Irish communities.'The government is particularly interested in supporting projects in the following areas:frontline advice, counselling and support services; elderly Irish emigrants;homeless Irish emigrants;Irish people affected by physical or mental illness, or with substance misuse problems or HIV/AIDS; the Irish Traveller community; access to training, employment or housingfor Irish emigrants;projects which focus on support for new emigrants; heritageand communityactivitiesthat promote Ireland's identityand maintain vibrant Irish communities abroad; research projects that add to the existing knowledge about Irish emigrant communities and fostering greater links and strategic cooperation between Ireland and the rest of the world'.[43]

At the Third Global Irish Economic Forum, on 4 and 5 October 2013, the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Mr. Eamon Gilmore TD, announced that the Department ofForeign Affairs and Trade would undertake a comprehensive review of itsdiaspora policy to examine all elements of its engagement with the Irish abroad.[44] The Department invited those at home and abroad who are interested in and affected by issues of emigration, and the wider questions of engagement with the diaspora,to contribute their views to the review.[45] Jimmy Deenihan was appointed the country's first ever Minister of State for the Diaspora in July 2014.

Atevery opportunity since the 1980s, the Chaplaincy has drawn attention to the Irish government's neglect of its community abroad and applied pressure to the government to take responsibility for its people. The Task Force on Emigration is a result of that relentless work.

NOTES

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10

From 2007 onwards

> Jubilee in the Bible was a custom every 50th year of wiping the slate clean, of forgiving and being forgiven, of celebrating the past but facing the future with a freedom which only God can give, a history, a biography, a book of stories, a story of a man's life, an examination of conscience, a giving thanks, a Eucharist.[1]

The Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy commemorated its Golden Jubilee in 2007. It had much to celebrate. It had touched many lives and had achieved so much, ranging from direct service provision to lobbying for change, challenging both Irish and British governments and contributing to Catholic teaching on migration. It had fought for and achieved acknowledgment from the Irish government of its responsibility for theIrish abroad, and it had ensured sustainable funding to support services. The Chaplaincy had emerged in a decade of doom and gloom, in 1950s Ireland; it could be argued that the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy celebrated its fiftieth year in another decade of doom and gloom, associated with severe economic depression and, furthermore, a very difficult and dark time for the CatholicChurch in Ireland and elsewhere.

A feature of the Chaplaincy, since its establishment, has been its commitment to evaluating its services and strategic planning.In the annual report of the Irish Chaplaincy in Britain for 2001, the first

female Director, Sr Lucy Troy, recorded that she had met with Frs Paul Byrne and Gerry Kivlehan to look at the future of the Chaplaincy.[2] Subsequently, Sr Lucy had six meetings with Donal McKinney from the AGIY (Action Group for Irish Youth) to discuss a possible development/ funding strategy for the Irish Chaplaincy. The organization wanted to 'revitalise itself,' to explore its mission, asking where it should focus in the future as well as discussing general issues including social justice, networking, workingwithin the Irish voluntary sector and within different dioceses.[3] It recognized that, increasingly, voluntary-sector organizations were developing collaborative partnerships to seek common aims and objectives.

Summing up the significance of the first fifty years of the Irish Chaplaincy in Britain in the 2007 annual report, Fr Gerry Kivlehan, Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Irish Chaplaincy, quoted from the *Book of Proverbs*: 'Where there is no vision, the people suffer' (*Prov 29:18*), suggesting that the qualities of a sustainable service are 'its clarity of vision, sense of purpose, and its quality of appropriate management'.[4] He referred to the services initiated by various members of the Chaplaincy through five decades offocus on caring for Irish immigrants in Britain. He recognized that those services, after receiving initial support from the Chaplaincy, were able to stand alone as independent charities:

> The Irish Chaplaincy is very proud of its pioneering and developmental role and also of the ethos and vision it instilled in many of those services. The Irish Chaplaincy is equally proud of its prophetic role, in being a voice for the voiceless, highlighting the unacknowledged aspects of migration and being an effective advocate on behalf of the more marginalised in our society… The Irish Chaplaincy is a person focused service; it is committed to demonstrating clear outcomes, giving real value for money and improving the quality of life, experienced by the more disadvantaged members of the Irish community in Britain.[5]

In 2007, its fiftieth year in existence, the Irish Chaplaincy in Britain restated its mission with the following affirmation of its activities:

> The Irish Chaplaincy in Britain shows the caring face of the Church towards Irish emigrants here, especially the vulnerable.It aims, through the provision of direct, culturally sensitive services and networking with other agencies, to integrate Irish immigrants into the Church and society in Britain andto be a voice and advocate for Irish emigrants; it aims to help with their needs, to care for those who have become the victims of emigration and to harness the talents of the whole Irish community for the good of that community.[6]

These aims were carried out through four main projects (or offices): the Director's Office; the ICPO; the Irish Travellers Outreach Project and the Older and Vulnerable Persons Project.

Philomena Cullen, a theologian, became the first lay Director of the Chaplaincy in 2007, and under her guidance these services were further developed.On 1 February 2011, the Feast of St Brigid, the Irish Chaplaincy in Britain (ICB) claimed St Brigid as its patron. Philomena Cullensaid:

> Through our work with prisoners, Travellers and older people, the ICB works with some of the poorest, most vulnerable and marginalised Irish people in society. St Brigid is the sort of person from whom those involved in this work can draw inspiration, hopeand strength. It is for these reasons and especially her legendary concern for the poor and marginalised, that the ICB has decided to adopt her as its patron saint.[7]

Fr Gerry McFlynn from the ICB responded:

> The choice is well made. Brigid of Kildare (Mary of the Gael) may have lived in the fifth century, but she was a woman well ahead of her time. Far from being a figure consigned to folklore, she emerges as someone who has much to say to us today about such contemporary concerns and issues as work for peace and justice, equality, care for the earth, as well as being a model for a contemplative life.[8]

In an interview for this book in 2014, Eugene Dugan, the current Director of the ICB, who succeeded Philomena Cullen, described himself as a 'charity mechanic'.[9] One of his concerns is that the identity of the ICB and that of the Irish Centre aresometimes confused by the public because of their close proximity.[10] In 2014, the ICB defined its vision: 'To be a leading and innovative charity that provides high quality services and support to excluded, vulnerable and isolated Irish emigrants in Britain.'[11] It stated:

> Our ethos as a faith-based organisation rooted in the Catholic tradition leads us to do this in a spirit of justice and solidarity, and with the ambition to inspire hope in those who are with us on this journey. Our aim is to galvanise the Irish community as a whole to work together to improve the lives of those we encounter in our work and ensure that no member of our community is forgotten.[12]

It stressed that it is, 'an organisation in which service users, staff, trustees, volunteers, funders and supporters can identify and share a sense of pride, and to which they are willing to commit', and it reasserted its belief and commitment to: human dignity; rights not charity; preferential options for the excluded, vulnerable and isolated; participation; collaboration; accountability and innovation.[13]

The focus of the IECE (Irish Episcopal Council for Emigrants) in Maynooth is now on prisoners. Joanna Joyce, Co-ordinator of ICPO (Irish Council for Prisoners Overseas) in Maynooth until she was succeeded by Brian Hanly, who took on the position in September 2014, in addition to his role as case worker and family support worker,explained that the organization is dealing with 1,200 clients and about 90 families.[14] Bernie Martin is the administrator, Sr Anne Sheehy, *Eileen* Boyle and *Joan* O'Cléirighare long standing volunteers. The Maynooth office managesand organizesthe extensive database. It has a penfriend service which is run by a team of eighty volunteers. It continues to publish and distribute *ICPO News.* [15] Joanna explained that theDepartment of Foreign Affairs is very supportive, and acknowledged the important role of the Consular Assistance Programme.[16] One of the

major developments is the production and distribution of the *Emigrant Information Pack* since 2012.[17] This annual publication is intended to help prepare those who are planning to emigrate by providing information which will enable them to make informed decisions and show them where they can get support while away.

The Irish Chaplaincy Seniors

In 2004, following the showing of RTE's *Ireland's Forgotten Generation*[18] on Irish television, the Irish Bishops launched the SIA (Support Irish Abroad) campaign. SIA, in addition to its function as an acronym, alsomeans 'longer' or 'farther' in Irish.[19] In 2005, the Irish Chaplaincy started its Older and Vulnerable Persons Programme to reach out to those who had emigrated in the 1950s and 1960s, with financial support from SIA and ALONE and the encouragement and support of the Irish Catholic Bishops and the Archdioceses of Westminster and Southwark.

The project aimed to support and advocate for the most vulnerable and isolated of older Irish people in London by reaching out to them in their homes as well as in care homes and in hospitals. It was concerned with spending quality time with older Irish people, listening to their life stories, offering support and encouragement and assuring them they are not forgotten.[20] Sr Bernadine McNulty explained how, for her and her team, including Fr Nigel Charles and Stafford Cunningham: 'Home visitation is at the very heart of our work. Old age, health problems and lack of support can all contribute to a person feeling lonely and isolated.'[21] The special commitment of the Irish Chaplaincy personnel can be heard in Sr Bernadine's words: 'It is a great privilege to be invited to offer someone support and help in their time of need.'[22] The Older and Vulnerable Persons Programme emerged from a new awareness of a population of Irish emigrants which is growing old abroad. The organization had a focus on preventing and alleviating social isolation and loneliness among older Irish people in London. As Fr Nigel Charles, Project Co-ordinator stated: 'Visitation is at the very heart of what we do. We are prepared to visit anyone in London. If a person is no longer mobile it is easy to feel forgotten. I believe that

through our visits and when people receive our newsletter, cards and phone calls they will realize that they are still valued and appreciated.'[23]

Now known as the Irish Chaplaincy Seniors, the project supports and advocates for the most vulnerable and isolated of older Irish people in London.It relies, to a large extent, on the enthusiasm and dedication of volunteers. Sr Mary Richardson, having worked in Sligo for forty years, volunteered to work with the ICB in 2014, doing outreach work withthe older community. She praised the ICB workers for being 'morally engaged and highly organised.'[24] Clients are referred by parishes, neighbours and concerned relatives.Sr Mary described meeting those aged sixty-fiveto ninety-fivein care homes, sheltered accommodation, bedsits and flats and explained that visits are quite regular to those who are unwell,in hospitaland may have additional family and housing issues.[25] The service, she emphasized, provides a wonderful support system to those in London experiencing all forms of 'brokennessand dependency'.[26] Interventions can include accompaniment to hospital, visiting people in hospital, helping to set up care plansand givingsupport to individuals until they are independent again. There is a full-time staff of two andEugene, the current Director of ICB,is also involved when possible; there are twelve active volunteers. Sr Mary poignantly explained the important role the Seniors Project has, at times, in helping to organize funerals both in Britain and Ireland.[27] This sometimes involves dealing with very sensitive relationships with the family of the deceased especially if, as is often the case, there are unresolved issues between those who emigrated and those who remained at home. She also described the comfort many elders experience from having someone to pray with them, sometimes remembering prayers in Irish from their childhood in Ireland.[28]

The Irish Travellers Outreach Project

The Irish Chaplaincy has a long history of working with Travellers. Fr Eltin Daly, based in Oxford from 1966, worked for about forty years with Irish Travellers,[29] visiting them and helping them prepare for and receive the sacraments. O'Shea explains how Archbishop Dwyer of

Birmingham,recognizing the importance of Fr Daly's work, requested that he be appointed full-time to Travellers in his Archdiocese.[30] As a result, Fr Daly was appointed Apostolate of the Travelling People in the West Midlands. He was gradually joined by a number of full-time workers and the organization grew when the Hierarchies of England and Wales extended the mission to the whole country. Fr Daly was appointed National Director, and St Joseph's House, Oxford became the National Centre.

Fr Joe Browne worked as a chaplain to the Travelling community in Westminster for six years before he was appointed to the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy to develop a new project to address some of the issues affecting Travellers, including families facing evictions and those on unauthorized sites. Based at the London Irish Centre, he supported Traveller groups and organizations. As Sr Lucy Troy explained: 'For Irish travelling people, their faith and way of life are deep and strongly held values. They see the Chaplaincy as appreciating their values and culture and therefore as being well-placed to work in solidarity with them when they perceive their human rights to be transgressed or unmet.'[31] Fr Joe Browne led the Irish Traveller Outreach Programme with particular emphasis on inter-community relations, eviction monitoring and liaison, providing frontline services and also working at a more strategic level. Fr Browne sat on the steering group of the Churches Network for Travellers and Gypsies, an ecumenical group working to provide support and advice to those from any church working with Travellers and gypsies. Conn MacGabhann took over from Fr Joe in the summer of 2011.

ICB Traveller Equality Project

The ICB **Traveller Equality Project** works to improve the situation of Travellers in the justice system in England and Wales. Gerry McFlynn,Project Co-ordinator for ICPO in London explainedthat:

> Many Irish prisoners have a difficult time in custody, especially members of the Travelling community. They are often the victims of verbal abuse by officers and other inmates and lead lives of

> what can only be described as quiet desperation. For many of them, ICPO is a lifeline. It is also a great source of comfort to their families to know that there is an organization here willing to help their loved ones and provide practical help and support.[32]

Voices Unheard

The ICBpresented a ground-breaking report on the experiences of Irish Travellers in prisons in England and Wales, at the Houses of Parliament, on Monday 13 June 2011.[33] *Voices Unheard* was launched by Patrick Mercer MP of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for the Irish in Britain, Lord Eric Avebury of the All-Party Group on Gypsies and Travellers and the Irish Ambassador, Bobby McDonagh. Authored by Conn Mac Gabhann, it was the first substantive research conducted into the Irish Traveller population within prisons in England and Wales, and it highlighted the unequal hardships faced by Irish Travellers in prison, in particular, problems with literacy, access to rehabilitation programmes and resettlement services.[34] The research found that Travellers comprise around one per cent of the total prison population.[35] Travellers are officially recognized as an ethnic minority group in the UK, however, unlike many other minority groups there was no system in place to monitor their numbers in the prison system or to assess their particular needs. The report aimed to redress some of this imbalance. At the launch of the report, former ICB Director, Dr Philomena Cullen, said:

> With over twenty-five years of experience of working with Irish prisoners in the UK, the Irish Chaplaincy in Britain (ICB) became increasingly concerned about the isolation and hardships experienced by Irish prisoners who come from a specifically Irish Traveller background. Irish Traveller prisoners face difficulties related to both their nationality as Irish, and to their ethnicity as Travelling people, resulting in a double whammy of exclusion and misunderstanding. Our report aims to throw light on the unique challenges faced by Traveller prisoners, challenges which

> have yet to be adequately acknowledged by statutory agencies, let alone solved by them. We hope this report will mark a major step forward in addressing those problems, for the benefit of the Traveller community and wider society.[36]

The report found that there was no effective overall strategy for monitoring Irish Travellers in prison, and that prisons had failed to put in place measures to ensure equality of opportunity for this prisoner group, even though Irish Travellers may represent between five per cent and eight per cent of the foreign national population in prison and are commonly subjected to racist treatment.[37] Many Traveller prisoners (46.3%) are young adults between the ages of eighteen and twenty-one.[38] Well over half the prisoners (58.9%) have a child or children under the age of eighteen, and over half were in need of basic educational intervention (59.3%).[39] More than a quarter of Irish Travellers (26.1%) were identified as having one or more mental illness.[40] The percentage is much higher among women at 64.7%.[41] Before they were imprisoned, thirty-seven per cent of Travellers lived on Traveller sites.[42] At least half were imprisoned because of obtaining property unlawfully.[43]

Voices Unheard called for the introduction of an effective process for monitoring Irish Travellers in prison.[44] It recommended that there be a Traveller representative to help with reception, induction, monitoring and delivering services to Travellers.[45] In addition, it recommended that celebrations of importance to Travellers, such as St Patrick's Day, should be recognized and used to create wider awareness of their culture.[46] It recommended that Traveller prisoners who do not have an official address should be permitted to have visiting orders left at the prison entrance, or an appropriate designated address.[47] The report highlighted that Travellers are often unable to access educational courses and other services in prison because they lack the literacy skills to fill out the appropriate forms.[48] It recommended that prisons should consider ways to make it possible for Travellers to do courses such as bricklaying and painting without having strict requirements for literacy, and that suitable education programmes for Irish Travellers, such as the peer mentoring reading programme, *Toe by Toe*, should

be encouraged.[49] *Toe by Toe* is a reading programme that has proved successful amongst Traveller prisoners. It is run by the Shannon Trust which trains prisoner mentors to work with learners on a one-to-one basis for fifteen minutes every day. Learners start with simple phonetics and work through the programme at their own pace.

The report asserted that prisons should allow Irish Travellers to buy the approved international phone card and that they should also be allowed to transfer money from their canteen account to their PIN phone accounts, because of the greater cost of calls to mobile phones.[50] It recommended that, if there are five or more Travellers in custody, regular meetings should be facilitated for the group, with access to appropriate resources.[51] The report highlighted particular problems around resettlement, with many Travellers being refused permission to return to their homes on sites when released on licence.[52] It made a number of cost-effective policy recommendations aimed at developing strategies for Traveller prisoners in order to aid their rehabilitation and to prevent future offending, including the suggestion that resettlement services in prisons should have strategies to deal with Travellers and conditions for release on licence should take into account the Traveller's right to live on a Traveller site.[53]

Since the publication of *Voices Unheard*, the National Offender Management Service in Britain has become more involved inaddressing some of the needs of Travellers in prison. Many prisons now hold Traveller groups, appoint Traveller representatives and hold Traveller History Month events in an effort to promote inclusion. The Traveller Equality Project works in collaboration with the National Offender Management Service, Probation Service and Crown Prosecution Service to advocate on behalf of Gypsies and Travellers, providing information and advice and producing resources for use in working with Travellers, delivering diversity training and providing a consultation service.

The Traveller Equality Project continues to campaign on issues affecting Travellers and Gypsies nationally, particularly in relation to discrimination, planning law and site provision. It was involved in the much publicized campaign to save the Dale Farm Travellers site in Basildon, Essex. In September 2011, Michael D. Higgins, as part of his presidential campaign, visited the Irish Chaplaincy in Britain's

Travellers project. He praised the work of both ICPO and the Travellers in Prison Project, *Voices Unheard,* and said that he hoped that it would lead to a resolution of challenges facing Traveller prisoners.[54]

In November 2011,The Traveller Equality Project launched TIPN (*Travellers in Prison News*), the first national newsletter for Travellers in prison. Its aim is to provide information, advice and encouragement to Traveller prisoners and to those who work with Travellers.The second edition of TIPN, published in March 2012 in time for St Patrick's Day, recorded some very important events which demonstrate the steady progress of the Project.[55] In September 2011, the code 'W3' for 'Gypsy or Irish Traveller' was included on the P-Nomis offender management system.[56] This coincided with the inclusion of a 'Gypsy or Irish Traveller' category on the UK Census for the first time. This is an important development as it means that, for the first time, the prison service will have official figures on the number of prisoners from these groups and will allow the Prison Service to work more effectively with them. It highlighted, however, that even though the code exists, many prisons are not using iteffectively and many Traveller prisoners were still being categorized as 'White British' or 'White Irish'.[57] It suggested that prison staff working on induction need to be more proactive, giving prisoners the full list of available ethnic codes to choose from and not making assumptions.[58]

In April 2012, the British government released a progress report from a ministerial working group set up to tackle inequalities experienced by Gypsies and Travellers. The report set out a range of recommendations relating to education, healthcare, accessing employment and accommodation and tackling hate-crime.[59] It also made specific recommendations for the NOMS (National Offender Management Service) to consider, in relation to the treatment of Gypsies and Travellers in custody and on probation.[60] *Voices Unheard* was acknowledged in the report which echoed its finding that Travellers faced: 'difficulties in gaining access to education and vocational training and discrimination relating to parole conditions and Home Detention Curfew'.[61] It also made reference to NOMS' own 2008 race review which found that Gypsies and Travellers experienced: 'difficulties accessing services, including offender behaviour programmes, as the

literacy level required was too high; derogatory and racist name calling primarily by prisoners, and by some staff, in two of the prisons visited; lack of confidence in the complaints system; and the lack of cultural awareness and understanding of staff.'[62]

The 2012 report made three specific commitments with regard to the treatment of Travellers in prison in England and Wales. The National Offender Management Service was tasked with ensuring Travellers had access to appropriate rehabilitation activities, that information and awareness about Traveller and Gypsy culture were provided to staff in the context of equality and diversity and that Traveller and Gypsy issues and awareness would be presented to new prison officers in sessions on race equality.[63] These commitments marked a very significant milestone. In 2011, the Census for England and Wales included a category for Gypsies and Travellers for the first time; consequently there now exists solid data on the experiences of Travellers in England and Wales.[64]

In 2012,The Irish Chaplaincy's Traveller Musician Postcards Series was launched. This is a series of images of Traveller musicians produced to remind us of the significant contribution of Irish Travellers. Launching them, Dr Peter Smith, an academic at the University of Ulster stated:

> When you look at the list of Traveller musicians it is simply amazing. They represent over fifty percent of Ireland's greatest musicians. Your series is a timely reminder of the cultural wealth of Irish Travellers and their unique contribution Irish life.[65]

ICB also developed a range of reading books for Travellers and a poster showcasing Irish Traveller Musicians. The books were produced in response to a need for more resources for Travellers in prison doing reading courses as the numberscontinue to increase. Conn Mac Gabhann, said, 'It's important to remember that Traveller men and women want to read interesting stories. No adult really wants to read a children's book when they are starting to read books for the first time. These books are interesting and they are relevant to Travellers' lives.'[66]

The Traveller Project worked with the National Offender Management Service and National Prison Radio to produce a new

radio programme for Travellers in prison. The show, 'Open Roads', includes music, storytelling, advice and chat and is made by Travellers for Travellers. In developing the concept, the team met with a Traveller focus group at HMP Gartree, to brainstorm regarding what should be included in the programme. The suggestions includedthe idea that traditional music and stories be mixed with more serious features and advice.[67] Some of the participants felt that the radio programme would be a great opportunity for older Travellers to talk about their lives and provide some 'food for thought' for younger listeners, helping them to avoid making the same mistakes theyhad made in their youth.[68] The focus group suggested it was important to include content from different Traveller communities, including English Romany, Irish Travellers, Scottish and Welsh Travellers and Eastern European Roma.[69] 'Open Roads' was decided on as a name. The open road is a shared symbol of the different Traveller communities in the UK and also symbolizes hope and possibility beyond prison. The first show was airedin 2013 and has since becomea regular hourly feature each month, with each show repeated several times.

The Traveller Project has been asked to sit on the Crown Prosecution Service's CAF (Community Accountability Forum) to advise and advocate on behalf of Gypsies and Travellers in contact with the Justice system.

Working with Gypsy and Traveller Offenders: A Thames Valley Probation Case Study, was commissioned by Thames Valley Probation and conducted by Joe Cottrell-Boyce of the Traveller Equality Project to gain a better insight into the experiences of its Gypsy and Traveller service users.[70] It was hoped that the findings and recommendations would be of benefit to practitioners in the Probation Service and its partner agencies. There has been very little research into Traveller offenders' experiences of probation or their experiences of the criminal justice system. The report made key recommendations for working with Gypsy and Traveller Offenders for Probation Officers.

The Ongoing Work of the ICPO

In existence since 1985, as it approached its silver jubilee, the ICPO continued with the same professional approach it had always

demonstrated. In 2006, in conjunction with the University of Bristol, ICPO and a number of solicitors and probation officers carried out a survey of Irish prisoners serving life sentences, with particular attention being paid to those who had passed their tariff dates, to investigate the plight of lifers experiencing difficulties progressing through the prison system because they continue to maintain their innocence.[71] It was hoped that the report's findings would put pressure on the Parole Board to look more closely at the problem and offer ways forward to lifers maintaining their innocence.Sr Agnes Hunt, a volunteer in the Maynooth office, with vast experience from her many years as a prison chaplain in the lifer section of HMP Wormwood Scrubs, has been writing to all new and existing prisoners in the UK who are serving a life sentence, for over a decade. Some she already knows from her time working in the UK prison system in the 1980s and 1990s.[72] A number of these men have been in prison for periods of up to thirty years and have virtually no other contacts, so her letters offer them vital support. Sr Agnes spends one day a week in Maynooth writing letters to those serving life sentences.[73]

In 2009-2010, the priorities for ICPO were to maintain the level of service to prisoners and their families, in terms of casework, prison visitors, family support, newsletters, the penfriend scheme, postcards, etc and to focus on the internal policies and procedures within the organization. It viewed as essential that robust structures and policies were in place to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of its service. These included: the development of a cross-jurisdictional database between ICPO Maynooth and London; a data protection and records management policy; a staff supervision policy; a media policy and prison visiting guidelines for ICPO volunteers.[74] In the same year, ICPO continued its campaigning and policy work, meeting on a one-to-one level with the Head of Equality and Diversity, the Head of Offender Management and the Policy Lead for ERS (Early Removal Scheme) at NOMS, the body that oversees the work of HM Prison Service and the National Probation Service. ICPO also gave a keynote address to the NOMS North-West Regional Conference, which was attended by all of the Foreign National Co-ordinators from every prison in the region. ICPO had regular meetings with officials of the Embassy of Ireland

(London) to discuss individual cases and generic issues affecting Irish prisoners. ICPO met privately with President Mary McAleese and talked to her about issues facing Irish prisoners. It undertook an amount of media-based promotion and awareness-raising, including widespread coverage in national and local media of the issue of a prison newspaper printing Irish jokes. The story was covered on the front page of *The Irish Times*. ICPO also published an article on Irish prisoners abroad in the Christmas edition of *The Irish World* newspaper, a profile in the *Catholic Times* newspaper, interviews on RTÉ Radio, BBC Radio and U105FM, ensuring that the issue of prisoners abroad remains a high profile one, both in Ireland and Britain.[75]

Silver Jubilee

In 2010, ICPOcelebrated its Silver Jubilee with a conference in Dublin entitled 'Bridging the Distance—Supporting Irish prisoners overseas and their families'.[76] A DVDcommemorating the event captures the significance of the work of ICPO in reaching out to isolated and marginalized prisoners, quoting some prisoners: 'It is amazing how lonely a busy prison can be'; 'Today I spoke three words' and 'I'm on suicide watch. They sit outside but nobody talks to me'.[77] Speaking at the event, President Mary McAleese who was involved with ICPO in its early years stated: 'As so many people turned away from prisoners, washed their hands of them it was the hands and hearts of ICPO that created a kind of bridge to the future for prisoners and their families.'[78] She continued to explain that prisoners and their families need a rock to lean on and, 'ICPO made itself that rock' and furthermore, 'lit a light that has helped to drive out darkness'.[79]

Nuala Kelly, the first co-ordinator of ICPO, explained that from the beginning ICPO was a special organization.[80] It was more than 'a fire brigade service'.[81] Founded on research, from the beginning: 'it was ahead of its time in being evidence-based: a very different approach, away ahead of its time', and fuelled by passion and action.[82] Anastasia Crickley, who had undertaken the research which preceded the establishment of ICPO,explained how prisoners' families were interviewed and asked about their experiences, the issues and

what would improve the situation.[83] She explained that ICPO was established to address those needs which had been identified.[84] The issues identified included support with visiting and understanding the visiting process along with help in demanding the right to social welfare support.[85] There was an ongoing need for advocacy on behalf of prisoners and information on the rights of prisoners in different jurisdictions.[86] Nuala Kelly explained the pain of broken-hearted mothers she had met, many of whom had no experience of dealing with the prison system, whose children were sometimes in prison due to anti-Irish racism.[87] She talked of how ICPO was like a drop-in centre for families and referred to the very important role of ICPO in being a bridge: 'between church and state, individuals and the state, prisoners and families, institutions of the state and individuals'.[88]

Founding member, Bobby Gilmore explained the context of the time, the significance of the PTA (Prevention of Terrorism Act) and the fear in the Irish community along with the cultural misunderstanding.[89] He spoke of how the ICPO office was broken into and files were taken; it had emerged in a conflictual situation.[90] He described the personal trauma he experienced when visiting the victims of miscarriages of justice in British prisons.[91] Billy Power, who had experienced injustice first hand, endorsed the important role of Sr Agnes when he explained the importance of 'having someone on the outside supporting you, believing in you, not condemning you'.[92] Gerry McFlynn, with over two decades of experience of working with ICPO, described it as a lifeline for many prisoners and families, as evidenced by their feedback.[93] Gráinne Prior explained how difficult it is to witness young people with no family support and how, 'ICPO was almost in *locoparentis*'; she recognized that it had been 'a privilege for us as an organization to journey with people, make good safe pathways for people with other organizations'.[94]

Anastasia Crickley suggested that the major contribution of ICPO was that it had represented, 'a fusion of pastoral concerns and the human rights of prisoners'.[95] ICPO articulates those rights. She argued that linking pastoral concerns with rights work is conducive to success and that ICPO has, 'the moral authority to speak out for those most marginalized'.[96]Referring to the current climate when

prisoners are often denied their human rights, Anastasia stated: 'The courage required then is required now.'[97]She expressed regret that there has not been a focus on issues for prisoners from other countries in Ireland.[98] This issue has since been addressed in February 2014 at *Journeying Together: Challenges Facing the Migrant Today,*[99] a conference co-hosted by the Irish Catholic Bishops' Councils for Immigrants and Emigrants, which marked the tenth anniversary of the publication of *ErgasMigrantes.*[100]

The Current Situation

The 2014 annual report outlined the objectives of ICPO. The aims have changed little since its inception. The report outlines the following organizational aims: to identify and respond to the needs of Irish prisoners abroad and their families; to research and provide relevant information to prisoners on issues such as deportation, repatriation and transfer; to focus public attention on issues affecting Irish prisoners; to engage in practical work in aid of justice and human rights for Irish migrants, refugees and prisoners at an international level and to visit Irish prisoners abroad when possible both in the UK and elsewhere.[101]

Its guiding principles are explicit: 'The work of ICPO offers an important form of institutional witness to the Gospel message'.[102] Its vision is rooted in Biblical teaching: 'He has sent me to announce good news to the poor, to proclaim release for prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind; to let the broken victims go free' (*Lk4: 18-19*); itis mindful of Christ's words concerning the judgment: 'when I was in prison you visited me' (*Mt.25:35*). 'We see our work as a form of Christian witness in assisting the most vulnerable and marginalised members of society.'[103]

ICPO is currently providing support to over 1,000 Irish prisoners in twenty-five countries around the world, the majority of whom are detained in England and Wales. ICPO in London and Maynooth work closely to support both prisoners and their families. ICPO provides support to a significant number of prisoners throughout Europe and in the United States. In 2014 there was a noticeable increase in the number of ICPO clients in Australia, reflecting the increase in Irish

emigrants there. ICPO is currently supporting a number of prisoners detained in South and Central America and South East Asia where prison conditions are a major cause of concern and there is difficulty accessing basic necessities. ICPO's Hardship Fund provides essential support to these prisoners. Volunteers, in particular members of religious orders, are the main visitors to ICPO clients in countries where English is not the primary language.

Irish prisoners now constitute the second largest ethnic group (after Polish prisoners) within the prison system in England and Wales. The majority are to be found in areas withlarge Irish populations such as London, the West Midlands, Merseyside and the North-West. Breda Power, ICPO case worker based in London, visits all nine prisons in the Greater London area and deals with the substantial follow-up casework. The female London prisons of Holloway and Bronzefield are visited by Kathy Walsh and Sr Agnes Miller respectively. Sara Thompson visits another female prison, Send, outside the London area. Sr Maureen McNally visits two prisons in the south of England while Jayne O'Connor visits five prisons in the south-west of the country. Sally Murphy, who also works for Merseyside Community Care, visits five prisons in the Merseyside area including the female prison of Styal. Other prisons are visited by Fr Gerry McFlynn. The outreach service is becoming more difficult due to the tightening of security in so many of the prisons. This is in addition to finding the right people for prison visiting. Privately run prisons are proving very problematic as many conduct their own security checks.

The London office deals with an average of twelve letters a day requesting everything from money for phone credit, clothes and toiletries to visits, family contact, information about repatriation and transfers, as well as legal representation. The casework resulting from these letters, phone calls and prison visits is carried out by support staff and volunteers under the supervision of Liz Power. Declan Ganley is the office administrator and IT expert responsible for logging all the data on the database. The office team is greatly helped by part-time caseworker, Russel Harland and volunteers, Sr Marie Power and Sr Moira Keane.

Fr Gerry McFlynn, ICPO Project Manager, writing in the 2014 annual report, outlined how the prison system in England and Wales

is changing rapidly under the current government. Changes include the new configuration of prisons with the closure of smaller and older prisons and the building of larger 'titan' prisons, the privatization of large parts of the probation service, the virtual abolition of Legal Aid and the unquestioned growth of the private sector in the criminal justice system.[104] McFlynnindicated that, 'the cumulative effect of all these changes is transforming the entire prison landscape and having an adverse effect on the treatment of prisoners'.[105] He explained that, while prisoner rehabilitation should be about giving people the tools with which to change their lives, a consequence of the changes to the Probation Service means that 'mentoring' is now being replaced by 'supervision', thus reducing opportunities for rehabilitation.[106] He noted that the emphasis is on market forces and programmes, with empathy being side-lined.[107]

McFlynn is concerned that the repatriation process can now take up to two years tofinalize. There is a sliding scale of priority requirements. Only those with strong family ties (parents, spouse and children) are now considered for transfer. Aunts, uncles and cousins come well down the list.Another concern is that,in recent months, some Irish prisoners have experienced bullying and proselytizing at the hands of prisoners trying to convert them to Islam.[108]

Speaking at *Journeying Together: Challenges Facing the Migrant Today* in February 2014, McFlynn identified three burning issues for Irish prisoners in Britain. Now over forty per cent of prisons have a population of 1,000 or more as authorities close prisons in favour of larger institutions.[109] He identified the importance of local prison in a locality where family and community can represent vital supports.[110] The privatization of the prison system has ensured it has become a business and indeed, a growth industry, 'a money-spinning system' with associated cutbacks in rehabilitation services, education, citizens advice, the probation service and chaplaincies.[111] 'I give chaplains another five years, with the possible exception of Islam the fastest growing religion in the prison system.'[112] The second issue he identified is the privatization of the Probation Service from April 2014, his concern being that quality and empathy will be replaced by an emphasis on markets and performance which has serious implications for the future

of the service.[113] The third challenge is the abolition of Free Legal Aid from 1April 2014. He concluded, 'The future does not look very bright to me at all.'[114]

Current funding

The Finance and General Purposes Committee of the IECEoversees the budget of ICPO Maynooth office. The Irish Chaplaincy in Britain has responsibility for ICPO London office. The Irish Episcopal Conference provides funding for the ICPOco-ordinator post. Grant funding from outside agencies also adds significantly to financing. In 2013, the Department of Foreign Affairs awarded approximately €65,000 for a caseworker post in ICPO Maynooth. This post includes specific funding for visits to isolated prisoners in the United States and Europe. The DFA also granted €30,000 towards ICPO'shardship fund. In 2013,ICPO also received grants from the St Stephen's Green Trust and the Sisters of Mercy Ministry Support Fund. The Society of St Vincent de Paul provided a much needed grant of €50,000 in January 2014.

ICPO administers a hardship fund which provides direct, effective and meaningful support to vulnerable Irish emigrants. It assists clients who are unable to access basic necessities, such as food, water, clothes and medical treatment. It helps families to maintain contact with their loved one, either through the provision of phone credit or a grant to help with travel and accommodation costs for prison visits. Requests for financial assistance come directly from prisoners or their families, from the nearest Irish Embassy and sometimes from a visiting Irish missionary. In relation to UK-based clients, requests often come from ICPO prison visitors, prison chaplains or social workers. Between 1 May 2013 and 30 April 2014,ICPO spent approximately €36,314.78 from the Hardship Fund to support prisoners in twentycountries around the world.

Prison visits

ICPO London office engages in an extensive prison visiting programme in the UK, while a caseworker in the Maynooth office visits a number of clients in the United States and Europe each year. These visits provide

ICPO clients with a rare opportunity to speak to someone from home. Difficult and complicated issues such as repatriation, deportation and post-release supports are easier to explain face-to-face rather than via letter, especially as some ICPO clients have literacy issues. Personal issues are also easier to discuss when there is direct contact. These visits also allow ICPO caseworkers to assess a client's needs in order to help the prisoner prepare for his or her release. Between May 2013 and April 2014 an ICPO caseworker visited five clients in the United States, one client in Canada and five clients in Scotland.

ICPO News, the ICPO Newsletter which is issued three times a year, is an excellent vehicle for communication in relation to issues of general interest. It is a very high quality production and is attractive and informative. Feedback from prisoners is always positive. Many refer to the ways it helps them feel more connected and gives them a sense of hope, knowing that they matter. The ICPO Penfriend Schemeaims to enable Irish people in prison abroad to keep in touch with everyday life in Ireland and to help with any loneliness and isolation that the prisoner may be experiencing. The penfriend scheme involves eightyvolunteers throughout Ireland. In the 2013-2014 year,ICPO forwarded 525 letters from clients to penfriend volunteers.[115]

Work with families

ICPO provides information, support and advice to the families of prisoners overseas. Restrictions on communication, language and cultural differences and an unfamiliar legal system are serious problems that families encounter. ICPO assists families with these issues and provides links to other useful contacts. It holds Family Information Days twice a year to provide families with an opportunity to meet other people who have a relative in prison overseas as well as using them as an opportunity to disseminate information and offer support. When necessary, Brian Hanley, ICPO Caseworker and Family Support Officer, meets families in person. These meetings are especially important immediately aftera person's arrest and detention as family members will often be in shock, be scared and will need support and information.

Post-release

Irish prisoners abroad have limited opportunities to prepare for release. Many of ICPO's clients have lived and been imprisoned abroad for many years. ICPO provides them with advice and support in advance of their release and assists them in accessing the supports they will need when they return to Ireland. The biggest issues that prisoners face initially when returning to Ireland are in accessing benefits and finding suitable accommodation. ICPO refers clients to programmes and organizations that assist former prisoners in accessing employment and training. ICPO plays an important role in informing the Probation Service and other service providers of the return of an overseas prisoner to Ireland, allowing clients to access necessary supports. ICPO provides post-release grants to clients who return to Ireland and have limited support to bridge the gap between their return and accessing benefits.

Liaison with Other Groups and Special Cases

Repatriation continues to be an important issue for many Irish prisoners overseas who wish to serve their sentence close to their families, particularly those detained in countries where prison conditions are poor and their health may be at risk.[116] The Department of Justice works with ICPO in helping to monitor repatriation applications and ICPO has engaged in extensive advocacy on the issue of repatriation of IPP (Indeterminate Public Protection) sentenced prisoners in the UK. The IPP sentence was abolished by the UK Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012.[117] However, there is no sentence conversion for those already serving an IPP. ICPO is extremely concerned about this as IPP sentenced prisoners are currently not eligible to apply for repatriation to Ireland on the basis that there is no equivalent sentence under Irish law. The abolition of IPP sentences in December 2012 left thousands of prisoners having to satisfy the Parole Board to get release. A small number of Irish prisoners on IPP sentences have expressed an interest in repatriation but because there is no comparable sentence in Ireland, they are unable to be repatriated even though they fulfil every other requirement.[118] Joanna Joyce and

Fr Gerry McFlynn have worked on this issue and in March 2014, they were invited to formally address a meeting of the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Justice, Defence and Equality to put forward the case on behalf of prisoners on this issue and asked for assistance so that any legal difficulty in transferring IPP sentenced prisoners to Ireland will be addressed as a matter of urgency.[119]

As a full member of the CEP (Confederation of European Probation) Special Interest Group on Foreign Nationals, a network of independent organizations that support European citizens imprisoned outside their country of residence and their families, in October 2013, ICPO and the other full members of the CEP Special Interest Group, Prisoners Abroad and the International Office of Reclassering Nederland, made a joint presentation at the World Congress on Probation which focused on the resettlement needs of foreign national prisoners.[120]

ICPO is a member of the CIIC (Coalition of Irish Immigration Centers) Detention Rights Working Group. This group explores detention and immigration issues in the United States. Staff members from a number of Irish immigration centres, including Irish chaplains attached to the Irish Apostolate USA, visit ICPO clients who otherwise might not receive any visitors.[121]

Fr Gerry McFlynn continues to engage through meetings and conferences with the group, PPMI (Progressing Prisoners Maintaining Innocence) who campaign to highlight the plight of prisoners maintaining innocence.Prison Service Instruction 20/2014 on 'Permanent Resettlement Outside England and Wales of Offenders on Licence',which came into effect on 1 June 2014, replacing PSI 01/2013 states that the aims of supervision on licence are to protect the public, prevent reoffending and aid rehabilitation.[122] It acknowledges that allowing someone to transfer to another UK jurisdiction or to permanently resettle outside the UK while on licence can assist in these aims.[123] Its aim is to give the person access to the support of their close family and alleviate the hardship faced by families who are trying to maintain contact. If a prisoner wishes to return to Ireland during the licence period he must apply to be considered for resettlement overseas. He/she must notify the relevant offender manager/probation officer of his/her interest well in advance of the release date to allow

adequate time for a request to be considered. A licence imposed in England and Wales is not enforceable in Ireland or any other country outside the UK and Islands, but in some cases the Irish Probation Service may consider voluntarily supervising a person who has been allowed to resettle in Ireland during his/her licence period.

This offer of voluntary supervision is not taken into account when the UK's NPS (National Probation Service) is conducting a risk assessment to decide whether a prisoner should be allowed to resettle in Ireland. However, once an application for resettlement has been approved the offender manager is expected to contact the Irish Probation Service to see if they can provide support on a voluntary basis following the move. The success of the application depends in part on the prisoner having close family in Ireland, not having committed a crime connected to Ireland and not being considered a danger to the public, at increased risk of reoffending or reduced risk of successful rehabilitation.[124]While the policy on resettlement is not a replacement for deportation, it does recognize that Irish nationals are not eligible for deportation except in exceptional circumstances.

Transfers to prisons in Northern Ireland continue to be problematic. There are only three prisons operating there—Maghaberry, Magilligan and Hydebank (YOI/Female)—and all are full. Moreover, as priority is given to those with current addresses in Northern Ireland, there is now a long waiting list for transfers.[125]

As ICPO celebrates its thirtieth anniversary in 2015, it is evident that it has maintained its high standards of service provision, lobbying and campaigning for Irish prisoners.

This analysis of the IECE in its present form is focused almost solely on the ongoing work of the Chaplaincy in the area of prisoner support. Whilst there is a link with the camp and hotel work of the past through continuedvisits to the older migrants who remain abroad in Britain, many of the innovative and ground-breaking projects have grown and been taken on by other agencies. The housing projects and Irish centres have become successes in their own right and the urgency for political activism has also diminished as the Irish government has engaged with the migrant issue more fully. Even the staffing structures have changed over time.Currently the only remaining priest working

for the Irish Chaplaincy in Britain is Fr Gerry McFlynn who is the backbone of ICPO but also provides spiritual, pastoral and liturgical support to the other Chaplaincy projects—the Travellers and Older Persons projects. He regularly takes masses in some of the prisons as well as at Traveller sites and in care homes. It is in Fr McFlynn that we see a symbolic embodiment of over fifty years of dedication and compassion.

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Afterword

This section of the book began life as a 'conclusion'. As time went by it became very apparent that 'conclusion' is not a word which can be applied to the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy in its present-day form as the Irish Chaplaincy in Britain (ICB). The work, of course, goes on. In the same way that this book, recording and celebrating the first fifty years of the Chaplaincy's work, follows on from O'Shea's volume written twenty-five years earlier,[1] we can await, with anticipation, the developments in the Chaplaincy over the next quarter of a century. While we wait eagerly for the new and innovative schemes which will almost undoubtedly emerge, it is undeniable that the history of the organization guides us to a clearer understanding of its present work.

And so, in summary, rather than in conclusion, it is worth reconsidering briefly how the Chaplaincy's dynamism has shaped the experience of migrants over decades. The history of the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy to Britain reflects the history of Anglo-Irish relations. Since its inception in 1957, the Chaplaincy has provided services, lobbied for justice and led campaigns. It developed the Camp Chaplain Scheme and the Hotel Chaplaincy and parish ministries in the 1950s. It met young Irish people from the boat trains and gave them advice, information and support. In the 1960s it developed very important housing schemes and initiativeswhich involved the establishment of CHAS (Catholic Housing Aid Society) and Shelter. Simultaneously, it initiated the development of centre-based services throughout Britain. It rallied again around young Irish emigrants who turned to Britain

for work in the recession of the 1980s. In 1985, the Irish Commission for Prisoners Overseas emerged during a very turbulent period when the PTA (Prevention of Terrorism Act) was introduced and many Irish suffered through highprofile miscarriages of justice. ICPO (Irish Council for Prisoners Overseas) reached out to and fought with and on behalf of the most disenfranchised of Irish people: those in prison. It continues to do so.

The Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy to Britain emerged in a very particular context—1950s Ireland—when there was widespread doom and gloom, an economic recession and high unemployment. The Catholic Church was at the height of its influence with 4,000 new ordinandsin one year. In a global context,Catholic social teaching as presented in papal encyclicals, pastoral letters and other documents was emphasizing the important ministry to migrants. The Church in Ireland, under the leadership of Archbishop John Charles McQuaid, eagerly met the challenge. Nearby, Britain was experiencing a post-war boom and was a ready source of employment for the many Irish seeking work.

The Catholic Church no longer enjoys the privileged position it once held and priests, nuns and religious have suffered as a result of the many disclosures of clerical sexual abuse in recent decades. It is, therefore, more necessary than ever to recall and record the very important contribution of Irish priests, nuns and religious, for almost six decades, in accompanying Irish emigrants to Britain.The versatility demanded of the chaplains was evident from very early on. Bobby Gilmore, writing in 1986, outlined the qualities and skills he viewed as essential for Chaplaincy personnel:

> There are no pre-arranged job descriptions in working with the migrant population. The migrant doesn't have a job description; he/she does have aspirations. So priest/sister/brother must be a person who can initiate. Of course the pastoral structure within which chaplains operate must be flexible. Sometimes it is not flexible and the indigenous local church is unaware of the special needs of migrants and treats them as if settled and integrated the day they arrive off the boat/train/coach. Chaplains must be able

> to work in unstructured situations. The change for a priest/sister from a parish in Ireland to pastoral work in London is just as difficult as it is for the migrant. The chaplain like the migrant to Britain has very little preparation. Some pastoral preparation is needed. If they were going anywhere else these preparations would be provided. Nobody, priest/sister/brother should be sent to work in the Chaplaincy against their will.[2]

In another paper entitled *Immigration—opportunity for the Church*, dated November 1989, Fr Bobby Gilmore stated that the pastoral response to immigrants and refugees was 'for the Church not an optional extra'.[3]He referred to the centrality of the migration experience to the Bible, referring to God's people as a pilgrim people. He wrote:

> The task of welcoming immigrants, refugees and displaced people into full participation and belonging to British society and into the Catholic Church with equal rights and duties is based upon the notion of God's people as an emigrant people journeying towards their homeland, being at home with themselves and the need to welcome him or her for 'I was a stranger and you welcomed me' (*Mt*25:35). The challenge of the church to give a welcome is a call to share the God-sourced compassion it has, thus enabling to dispel destructive attitudes, stereotypes and racist prejudices. This commitment challenges the Christian community to express the universality of God's love. 'Accept one another then as Christ accepted you for the glory of God' (*Rom* 15:7).[4]

Speaking in Dunboyne, County Meath in 2007, at a conference organized to mark the first fifty years of the Emigrant Chaplaincy, Cardinal Sean Bradyreminded his audience that: 'The words Irish and emigration are synonymous.'[5] He referred to the world of the emigrant where 'insecurity often becomes the norm' and stressed how the quality of the welcome received by the migrant helped him.[6] He acknowledged the importance of having 'those we love by our side when circumstances weary the body or soul' and he referred to the

'right to family life' and the need to 'encourage healthy integration'.[7] These remarks reflect the values which permeated the work of the Irish Chaplaincy Scheme from its very inception. While there was an early emphasis on sacramental work, pastoral work was also emphasized. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, one of the most gaping needs was in the area of homelessness and housing provision. The Catholic Church was quick to respond to these needs, and the enormity of the Chaplaincy's role in this area is hard to overstate.

Queen Elizabeth II, in her speech at the state banquet in honour of President Michael D Higgins at Windsor Castle on8 April 2014, stated:

> People have moved freely between these islands over the centuries. Britain has been hugely enriched by the migration of Irishmen and women to these shores.The contribution of Irish people to Britain has reached into every walk of British life. On your visit, you are meeting men and women of Irish descent in parliament, in our universities, in our health service, in the civil service, music, faith, business, and sport.And yet, over the years, many Irish migrants to Britain encountered discrimination and a lack of appreciation. Happily, those days are now behind us, and it is widely recognized that Britain is a better place because of the Irish people who live here. We can celebrate not just the Irish men and women who helped to build Britain but also the Irish architects who helped to design it, including that great architect of parliamentary reform, Daniel O'Connell, whose life and work you will have remembered this afternoon on your visit to Parliament.[8]

Looking at the history of the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy, it is clear that the chaplains and lay apostolate played a very important part in this journey and, in no small way, accompanied the migrants, facilitating them and helping them to participate fully in British life. At times this was a difficult and challenging task and at others less so.

President Michael D Higgins summed this up at Westminster on the same day:

> We acknowledge that past but, even more, we wholeheartedly welcome the considerable achievement of today's reality—the mutual respect, friendship and cooperation which exists between our two countries. That benign reality was brought into sharp relief by the historic visit of Queen Elizabeth to Ireland three years ago. Her Majesty's visit eloquently expressed how far we have come in understanding and respecting our differences, and it demonstrated that we could now look at each other through trusting eyes of mutual respect and shared commitments.The ties between us are now strong and resolute. Formidable flows of trade and investment across the Irish Sea confer mutual benefit on our two countries. In tourism, sport and culture, our people to people connections have never been as close or abundant. Generations of Irish emigrants have made their mark on the development of this country. As someone whose own siblings made their home here, I am very proud of the large Irish community that is represented in every walk of life in the United Kingdom. That community is the living heart in the evolving British-Irish relationship. I greatly cherish how the Irish in Britain have preserved and nurtured their culture and heritage while, at the same time, making a distinctive and valued contribution to the development of modern Britain.[9]

The toast made by President Higgins at the Windsor banquet on 8 April 2014, provides a fitting and succinct end point to this study of struggle and triumph over half a century and more of compassion, care and *charism* in the Catholic Church:

> Today I would also like to turn again to the oral tradition of our ancient language a *seanfhocal*, or wise saying, often applied to the mutuality of relationships. It observes simply:"arscáth a chéile a mhairimíd".

Because *scáth* literally means shadow, this phrase is sometimes translated as, "we live in the shadow of each other." However, there is a more open and more accommodating meaning. *Scáth* also means shelter.

The word embodies the simple truth that physical proximity brings with it an inevitability of both mutual influence and interaction. But more importantly, I believe, it implies the opportunity, even the obligation, of reciprocal hospitality and generosity; the kind of generosity reflected in your words this evening when you encourage us to embrace the best version of each other.

Ireland and Britain live in both the shadow and in the shelter of one another, and so it has been since the dawn of history. Through conquest and resistance, we have cast shadows on each other, but we have also gained strength from one another as neighbours and, most especially, from the contribution of those who have travelled over the centuries between our islands, and particularly in recent decades.

The contribution of Irish men and Irish women to life in Britain, which Your Majesty has acknowledged with such grace, is indeed extensive and lends itself to no simple description. It runs from building canals, roads and bridges in previous decades, to running major companies in the present, all the while pouring Irish personality and imagination into the English language and its literature.

Tonight we celebrate the deeply personal, close neighbourly connection which is embodied in the hundreds of thousands of Irish and British people who have found shelter on each other's shores.[10]

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