



Sisters Hospitallers

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ENGLISH PROVINCE NEWSLETTER



Hospitality Europe Meeting

In June, Sr Josephine participated in the first of the two 2018 Brussels Hospitality Europe office meetings with the Order of St John of God's and Sisters Hospitallers' European Provincial Reference Persons.

The work of the European office in the first 6 months of the year, and the main projects of the Union institutions were presented, as well as the new protocol to appraise proposals for European projects submitted by Co-workers in the Provinces, and the likely post-Brexit scenarios, amongst other things.

A number of practical examples illustrating the main ways of drawing up, preparing and implementing European projects were offered to acquaint the members with the main details of the European Commission's call for projects.

Mgr Paul Tighe, the Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Culture, reported on the initiatives being promoted by the Holy See and other Catholic Institutions for the "European Year of Cultural Heritage, 2018".

Hospitality Europe

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“The aim of the We Are Like You project convinced me”



Marta Menéndez with one of the patients, E.E.

Marta Menéndez is a 29-year-old Psychiatrist from Gijón, Spain, currently working at the St Benedict Menni Mental Health Center in Liberia.

Tell us a little bit about you...

My name is Marta Menéndez, I am 29 years old and was born in Gijón (Spain). Since my childhood, I've always been interested in health-care and biology, in how human beings function.

When I was studying philosophy in baccalaureate, I started to have a real interest in human behaviour and for what motivates us, for how our mind works. I started to do some research and to read psychology books in order to get an answer to my questions. That's when I realised I wanted to study Medicine and become a Psychiatrist.

Why did you decide to work at the Step Down Unit?

Once I finished my Psychiatry residency in the hospital of Donosti, I felt the need to stray from the path most of the doctors are forced to follow. I knew the Aita Menni Hospital as it is well-known in the mental health field in Euskadi. Just before my residency was over, I got an email from a doctor I was working with that stated a psychiatrist was needed for a new mental health project in Liberia. As I wanted to do something different to the majority, I didn't hesitate to contact the coordinator of the project, Mikel Tellaeché. His closeness and simplicity and the aim of the We Are Like You project convinced me.

How is it to live in Liberia like?

The experience is being as enriching and satisfactory as expected, personally and professionally. Getting used to the Liberian mentality

was the hardest because we live in the West, in the century of prevention. We are educated to plan, organise and solve problems before we have them. But here, solutions are sought once a problem has come up, with the little human and physical resources that you have.

The positive side is the chance to be immersed in a completely different culture. It makes you more flexible and able to re-think about your own one, you feel less conditioned for what you have learnt as the "norm" since you were little.

Can you tell us more about how the patients are progressing?

The progress is positive. This is a country with few resources and mental health infrastructures, a country where mentally ill women suffer from physical, sexual and psychological abuse, which would be inconceivable in the West. In that sense, we are achieving results by treating our patients for what they are: humans.

“Thanks to a human, empathic and supportive treatment, these women can be rehabilitated and have the life they deserve”

We realised that although the medication is really important, it is only the 10% of everything we do. Thanks to a human, empathic and supportive treatment, these women can be rehabilitated and have the life they deserve and are able to restore their faith in humankind.

Can you tell us about a particular moment that has touched you?

Each one of the patients of the Step Down Unit leaves mark on us. Particularly, I would like to mention E.E., a 35-year-old patient who suffered the consequences of the lack of knowledge about mental illness in Liberia. People around

her thought she was wicked, and she was tied to a post by her wrists for months, during which she was beaten and burnt. Nowadays, the scars of the horror she went through are still visible.

When she arrived at the Unit, she used to knee and beg us not to do anything bad to her, promising us she'd behave well. I was amazed by how quickly she got her smile back, one of the most beautiful ones I've ever seen.

I was affected not only by her past but for all the difficulties we encountered during her healing process because she found shelter in her madness—who would like to consciously live in a world that has caused so much pain? After seven months with us, E. is back home, trying to get a business off the ground, with her feet firmly on the ground and her beaming smile.

How do you think people can help to change the situation mental health patients live in?

Like any other problem in society, the root is the lack of education and knowledge. Liberians aren't



Patients of the Step Down Unit at St Benedict Mental Health Center

"Mental illness awareness campaigns should be done so that people could understand that it is not witchcraft."

bad; they simply don't know much about mental health. Firstly, a lot of mental illness awareness campaigns should be done so that people could understand that it is not witchcraft but an illness. Only by doing that,

we could erase the brutal stigma patients are subject to, which would massively contribute to their recovery. Secondly, like in many other areas, infrastructures and medical care should improve considerably.

St Francis Xavier Hospital

Accreditation for the Training of House Officers and Physician Assistants Granted

The Medical and Dental Council of Ghana has accredited the St Francis Xavier Hospital for the training of House Officers and Physician Assistants.

The Council approved the accreditation for the training of maximum of two House Officers for Obstetrics and Gynaecology, five House Officers for Surgery, three Physician Assistants (Medical) and three certified registered Anaesthetists.

The accreditation became effective on 26th June and will last for two years.

This is another accomplishment of the hospital, that is also rated as one of the best ones in the area (Assin Fosu).



St Augustine's Home

Summer Fayre raises £1300



On 30th June we held the St Augustine's Summer Fayre. We were blessed with an amazing weather and raised £1300. There were various stalls and a bouncy castle for the children.

People loved walking around the garden, chilling under the trees shade and looking for interesting stuff to buy. There was also a raffle with lots of prizes!

The money collected will be used for the benefit of our dear residents, providing them with opportunities to go on outings, receive the visit entertainers and to experience interesting activities and equipment to enrich their lives.

"Very enjoyable. It was nice to see so many people and there were a lot of children too!"



Decorating Cakes

On the 3rd of July, our residents enjoyed decorating cakes and mixed crispies and cornflakes with chocolates and made them all look really good, colourful and mouth-watering!

It was so good to have them in the afternoon with a cup of tea... thank you for the effort you all put into the activity!

Yet another pampering day that was a success by listening to relaxing music with a treat of a variety fruits and crisps, nibbles and some drinks.

Four residents at a time had the chance to have their nails polished, makeup and hair done and hand and foot massages.

Our main priority is to see our residents happy. It makes us feel better too.

I'd love to do it again, it's been a lot of fun!



"I'll be sleeping better tonight I was so happy is well worth going"

"Is really nice my feet is feeling better."

"Nice chat, I had my nails cut and polished. Lovely raspberries and strawberries"

"I had the best afternoon"
"I was dancing with the music"

Summer in the Garden



As they did in June, residents are spending some time outside this summer thanks to this incredible sunny weather we have to make the most of as we know it won't last forever!

Some of them prefer to walk around, others like to stay chatting in a circle and others enjoy watering our beautiful plants and flowers.

Time for Music!



Daniel Brewerton came to St Augustine's Home to entertain our residents, sisters and co-workers, who enjoyed dancing and listening to music from the Rat Pack.

Thank you, Daniel, for such a fun afternoon, we hope you come back soon!

Christ the King Care Home

Rivers Primary Academy School Choir



The children's Choir from Rivers Primary Academy School in Walsall came to sing for the residents and us all on Friday 29th June. This was instigated by the son of one of our new couples to the home, Roy and Margaret Craddock as it is their granddaughter Rose who conducts the school choir.

The choir sang beautifully for us and was a pleasure to listen to, brightening up our morning perfectly. It was

"With many grateful thanks to Rose and the children for taking the time to come and sing for us."

also Rose's birthday so a cake was served and we all sang happy birthday to complete.

Please do come back again as you will always be welcome!

Pilgrimage to Our Lady of Lourdes



On the first Sunday of July there was a Pilgrimage in honour of Our Lady of Lourdes to what is normally called the Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes in England.

This shrine is next to the Parish Church with a statue of Our Lady. The whole community went together with



six residents and the son of one of them. Barry was our good driver and was as always kind and helpful.

The Celebration started with Marian prayers, rosary, confessions and a procession, but we only stayed for the Eucharist as it was too hot for the residents.

The solemn Mass was at 4pm. The main celebrant was Bishop Terence Brain, and several priests concelebrated with him. During the celebration, there was the anointing of the sick, **many people, young and old, received the Sacrament of the sick, most of our residents were anointed by the Bishop** and were very happy about it.

It was very well organised, there were people helping with the wheelchairs. The St John Ambulance, pilgrim doctors and nurses were also present as well as helpers offering cold water and making sure everyone was OK.

It was obvious that **most people go there to find peace and healing and to present to Mary their pains, suffering and sorrows.** We, sisters and residents greatly enjoyed the experience.

The replica was built between 1927 and 1934 and since 1966 has been the site of annual pilgrimages. **It got protected heritage status last year due to its architectural interest as an interesting example of an outdoor Lourdes Grotto shrine,** unusual in England for its naturalistic representation of a cave formation. It is also a famous landmark in Hednesford. It is very popular with the community.



Don't Stop the Music!

Songs from the Musicals

With the success of our regular Classical Music Hour and following feedback from the residents we are now also running regular sessions of 'Songs from the Musicals'. Residents have said how lovely it was to hear the songs and they reminisced about the shows/musicals they have seen such as Phantom of the Opera, Cats and Joseph.

Tunes from the 50s and 60s from RT&3

We were delighted to welcome back this small piece music band, Linda, Kath and Roy on guitar, who sang some favourite tunes from the 50s and 60. The added bonus was they brought along songbooks so we could all join in – what a great time we had!

'Bitz n Pieces'

Getting into the summer spirit the band were dressed in Hawaiian shirts for their performance this month. With the drum kit, guitars and vocals, Dave, Don, Bob and Mark brought the lounge alive with a great medley of music that got us singing, swaying, toe-tapping and dancing. With family and friends joining in we all had a wonderful afternoon.

Both Bitz n Pieces and RT&3 volunteer their time to perform and entertain us at Footherley and we would like to take this opportunity to thank them so very much for their kindness. We really do appreciate it.

Tina's Birthday



Tina's 60th Birthday – just to add how Tina spent her birthday which was believe it or not at the top of Mount Snowdon with her family. Please see a couple of the photos taken – one is of the amazing view and the other is of Tina with her family enjoying a glass of bubbly! Tina had a really lovely day and it was a birthday she will always remember.

Special Moments

We had another much-awaited visit from the ice cream van. As you can see, a lot of us were queuing for a refreshing ice cream!

And Sr Tomasa and George had a big laugh with the sister's 'hat', talking about multi tasking... there's nothing Sr Tomasa won't do!



Tis Time to Shell Peas



With fresh peapods in abundance, residents were asked if they would like to help to shell peas. With the response being ooh yes ... our Chef ordered plenty! We all sat together, shelling peas into colanders, chatting about how we used to do this with our parents and grandparents. The familiar sounds of the pods popping, the lovely smell and of course the taste really made this a fun interactive activity and one that we will definitely repeat!

World Cup Fever

With the excitement that there was a chance England could reach the final, this gave us another great opportunity to decorate our table in reception. Residents helped make the bunting and put up the football net but sadly our hopes were dashed after Croatia beat the team 2-1 in the semi-final. Despite the result, our praise goes to England Team for all their efforts!



Care Certificate Presentation

Rita Dormann, Laura Truman and Tracy Bridges were presented with their Care Certificates. With many congratulations to you all and well done for all your hard work and efforts.



St Teresa's Home

Outing to the Serpentine Lake



On the 25th of July, we had one of the most beautiful days of this summer – with an exciting outing to Hyde Park. Eight residents, Sr Isabel, Sr Cecilia, Sr Pilar, Anita, Ricardo, Mrika and Lilly, all dressed up took the taxis in the morning just after coffee time.

The weather was beautiful and very warm - just right to enjoy a boat trip on the Serpentine Lake. *It was a joyful experience with lots of dancing as the crew of the boat surprised us with Spanish music.* For almost an hour, we enjoyed the smooth sailing, looking at the swans and geese in the lake and the green gardens around.

After, we all gathered in the open cafeteria by the lake and enjoyed a lunch prepared by the kitchen staff in the home. There was a lot of banter and jokes and residents commented how amazing it is to have lunch out in the open with the beautiful view in front and that it is just a perfect day! We also had some coffee and were treated by Sr Isabel with ice cream and strawberries, delicious and appreciated by all.

The special cars from Liberty Drive who help disabled people by taking them on tours also contributed and enriched our wonderful experience. *They took us on a ride through Kensington Gardens and showed us a close view from Kensington Palace, the Gardens, the Serpentine, Peter Pan statue and the Royal Albert Hall* telling us interesting details about each place we visited.

"It has been just fantastic, I am so happy that I have been invited and came with the group!" Pauline

Everyone enjoyed the outing very much, it ended with all feeling recharged with sunshine and great positive energy. All residents thanked sisters and staff for organizing a really wonderful day.

"Thank you for that wonderful experience, it made me feel again a normal happy person enjoying the things I did in my youth." Ursula

BBC Young Musician Winners' Concert

On the 12th of July we had a fantastic musical treat at St Paul's Church. It was a special day for all attending the concert and even for Fiona Costa -the organiser of these wonderful events that take place every other month.

She presented the musicians saying **we are lucky to attend a unique concert of four cellists all of whom are winners of BBC Young Musician.** They performed part of the programme prepared for the special concert for the BBC Proms at Royal Albert Hall later that week when the BBC Young Musician 40th Anniversary was celebrated.

We had Natalie Clein, Guy Johnston, Laura van der Heijden and Sheku Kanneh-Mason – all amazingly talented. **Sheku even played at the Royal Wedding of Prince Harry and Megan just two months ago.** Sheku's gifted sister also participated in the concert accompanying on the piano and had one solo performance of Chopin sonata, which left the audience speechless.

We were presented with a beautiful programme including pieces by Bach – Sarabande, Giovanni Sollima – Vibrez!, Barriere – Sonata in G Major, Popper – Requiem. **The performance was beautiful and captivating and the residents were absolutely elated at the end of the concert.** There was a big round of applause for the musicians and a special thank-you for Fiona Costa who invited us for the regular tea and homemade cakes.

Some of the residents decided to express gratitude personally to the performers and were very excited to have the opportunity to talk to them and take memorable photographs.



Monthly Activities

Besides going out and organising parties, residents have had a busy time in July. We've done exercises most mornings, decorated pots with volunteers and together explored our creativity and experimented in colours which both residents and volunteers enjoyed a lot.

Also, we prepared elegant boxes as presents to some of the residents' relatives and friends. We are looking forward to August for some more creative sessions!



Movies & Concerts in Our New Entertainment Room

Hiding from the unusual heat waves some days, although really enjoying having a proper summer this year, we organised quite a few afternoons in our new entertainment room.

The new asset was finished two months ago and has a fantastic big screen Smart Television which has built internet in it and allows us to play movies and programmes on YouTube, BBC IPlayer, Netflix, etc. It is great as it completely fulfils the original idea behind having it – to give the residents a special place with privacy where they can enjoy their favourite programmes, movies and concerts in peace and undisturbed.

Residents said they are absolutely thrilled and so happy to gather there a few times per week and watch something together. And even one of the residents who does not like going out of her room too much, began to join us for documentary programmes, and she loves it!

In July, we organised Wednesday afternoons with documentaries about famous people and histori-



cal places such as The Seven Wonders of the World, The Secret of Nefertiti, and a very enjoyable afternoon for everyone watching BBC movie about the life of Queen Elizabeth II. As the last year we also began following the BBC Proms and played one of the proms on Fridays, a very welcomed event by all who love music.

Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel



Our Lady of Mount Carmel is the title given to Mary in her role as Patroness of the Carmelite Order. The first Carmelites were Christian hermits living on Mount Carmel in the Holy Land during the late 12th and early to mid 13th century.

Since the 15th century, popular devotion to Our Lady of Mount Carmel has centred on the Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, also known as **Brown Scapular**, a sign with promises of Mary's special aid during life and especially at the hour of death: protection from harm, protection from dangerous situations and deliverance from Purgatory.

Traditionally, it is believed that Mary gave the Scapular to an early Carmelite named St. Simon Stock, believed to be an early English Prior General of the Carmelite Order soon after its migration to England.

Under Mary's powerful intercession, the Province was entrusted the mission and with simplicity and profound devotion, we celebrated the day. We had a dual feast, as Sr. Carmen also celebrated her feast day starting with a solemn Morning Prayer, following by especial Mass.

The statue of Our Lady of Mount Carmel presided our gatherings. **Fervent prayers were expressed for the well-being of the Province and all the people and activities that we are undertaking**, with the sure hope that our prayers and petitions will be granted.

The parents of Sr. Rosa, a Claretian sister who came for an intensive English Course, happened to be here and joined us in the celebration. It was a memorable day.

Restored Memorial at St. Mary's Cementery



The first Memorial Grave was opened in 1946 to bury the first English sister M. Agustina Finch (1879-1946). The Memorial was built in white granite that couldn't be cleaned after 72 years.

The restoration was carried out by Philip Smyth, J H Kenyon Funeral Directors, who is a friend of the Sisters. The work was completed by the middle of July and the new Memorial was blessed once more on the 23rd, in

the presence of Sisters Carmen, Cecilia, Josephine and Isabel. The Memorial, made with outstanding granite, has improved greatly, and it will be much easier to maintain.

"The service was simple but profound and we were very touched."

To Dearest Sister Isabel Cantón...



To Dearest Sister Isabel
Please accept this little prayer
Sent with love from us all who care

You are constantly in our prayers and thoughts
We admire your strength, courageousness and
resource

You are the one who sets the example
For us to follow with you at the temple

Keep strong as we know you will
And keep taking that bitter pill

For in time you will see
That your journey of treatment will set you free

God Bless
From all at Fotherley Hall

We want to **SHARE YOUR NEWS** in the Provincial Newsletter:
residents, staff and volunteer stories; birthdays; a day in the life of...

Send your suggestions and news to:

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