

# MEETING IN DUBLIN, MARCH 2014

Spiritual Directors in Europe Meeting in Dublin

Ireland is a blessed country. We were fortunate to be part of this blessing between 12-17th of March, 2014 at Emmaus Centre and around it. Thank you Una, and thank you for your wonderful crew, who made us feel at home, and made us possible to participate. We had a wonderful look into the Celtic Soul, and you were transparent windows for us.

When I arrived I looked at the clouds from the plane, and they were white. When we descended and flew through them, they were grey. In the evening I looked up at the sky and the sinking sun painted them in red colours, and where its beams not sparkled any more, they were blackish. The same clouds, the same eyes, yet different perceptions. Isn't it that we perceive things differently from different angles? I almost wrote angels, but the other participants were angels, so I would not commit any mistake, by changing the spelling. It is so good to be among sisters and brothers, in quietness, in prayer, because the situations are shaped as they are in reality. Do we trust our eyes or do we trust our Lord?

At home I ask my wife if I want to know how I am. In Dublin I participated without her, so there was no one to ask about how I am. Yet on Friday morning, during the silent morning prayer I had the opportunity to meet with myself, without being ashamed, without being proud, just with myself. And it was very refreshing to be reassured, that I can come to our Lord as I am. I don't have to wear a mask; I don't have to hide myself.

Someone asked me: why do I come to these events? Among several answers I mentioned: because of the others. Then somehow I didn't like my answer – it sounded so simple –, and continued to think about it, and then just popped up in my mind, that because of Christ met in my fellow sojourners. And that sounded right in my heart.

In Dublin there was so much beauty that one felt: my soul can't take it all. The beauty of the people, the splendour of the books and manuscripts, and of the palpitating life encountered in Dublin overwhelmed us.

We arrived on Wednesday, some of us after a long journey. We were welcomed by the members of the EC, had dinner and after that partook in the opening prayer. Each one presented herself and himself, and then the representative of that country presented a symbol of her or his home country. After prayer the evening ended with a social meeting.

On Thursday morning we started with a deep morning prayer with the theme Come as you are and live by my promise, lead by Sr. Ligita Ryliskyte. After that John Bennett spoke to us about "Coming Home to Our Hearts" during our Going Deeper. Later on during the "Aspects of Celtic Faith" Dr. David Kelly spoke about High Crosses, Dr. Bernadette Flanagan about The Place of Women in Irish monastic Celtic spirituality and Dr. Una Agnew about Literature and Our Celtic Faith. During the afternoon we had the first part of the AGM, listening to the Chair's and treasurer's report, speaking about subsidies, the webmaster and our homepage. After that we visited the chapel, the Emmaus Centre. After dinner we had Eucharist led by Damjan Ristic from Slovenia, with help of sr. Mgodolna Kovari and Zsuzsanna Laczko.

On Friday it started our quiet day, with a silent morning prayer, lead by Sr. Claudia Theinert from the Netherlands. After our silent breakfast it started the Irish pilgrimage in two (three) directions. The first group went with Rev. Michael Rodgers to the ancient monastic site Glendalough and experienced the blowing of the Spirit. The second group went with Br. Denis Gleeson to Dublin to see the Book of Kells, Chester Beatty Library and the Carmelite Church. Those who decided to stay in the Emmaus Centre could meditate upon the painting by Vélasquez entitled "Emmaus". After returning to the Emmaus Centre we had dinner in silence, and silent but enriching Eucharist that Inge Merete Gross from Denmark celebrated.

On Saturday the morning prayer was led by Ingeborg and Sigmund Bø from Norway. Ulla Kall played the guitar, as she usually did in our prayers and celebrations. We had an open day with AISGA members. Maike Ewert, our Chair, held an astonishing presentation about SDE, then Dr. Una Agnew and Dr. Bernadette Flanagan addressed the participants. This was followed by Rev. Dr. Ruth Patterson speech about "The Ministry of Restoration". In the afternoon we could choose among workshops, held by Mary Elizabeth Nono about Supervision: Noticing Naming and Exploring into Freedom, by Gideon van Dam and Jacoline de Koe about Spiritual Direction in the Reform Tradition, by Penny Warren about The Community of Aidan and Hilda. Living a Celtic Way of Life Today, by Pirkko Lehtiö, Raili Heikinheimo and Sirkka-Liisa Raunio about Spiritual Direction in the Lutheran Tradition in Finland, by Brigitte Wellner about Middendorf Breath Experience, by Sr. Bernadette Murray CHF about Making a St. Brigid's Cross with Irish rushes, by Ms. Debbie Moore about Accompanying Young Adults on Their Faith Journey, and by Rev. Ruth Patterson about A reflection on Psalm 85 verse 10 – Justice, Mercy, Truth and Peace. I participated in the workshops lead by Gideon van Dam and Jacoline de Koe, where Protestants and Roman Catholics discovered that we have the same roots, and felt strongly that we are kin in Christ. In Debbie Moore's workshop we discussed about young adults, and how can we accompany them on their faith journey, how can we relate to them and what does this mean to us. After the workshops we had a festive Eucharist together with the visitors and it was good to experience the unity in Christ. The Eucharist was led by Sigurd Bakke from Norway together with Päivi Vuorilehto and Sirkka-Liisa Raunio from Finland.

On Sunday our morning prayer was led by Ástridur Kristinsdóttir and Vigfus Ingvar Ingvarsson, our friends from Iceland. The second part of the AGM was held, when we elected Aija Kaartinen as secretary. It was presented Hirska Kruha (The House of Bread) in Slovenia, the next venue for the meeting in 2015. We also discussed about possible venues in 2016 and 2017, and about membership. We concluded thanking our leaving secretary, Susanne and blessing our new secretary, Aija. In the afternoon we went in triads, where we experienced great fellowship in a secure environment. It followed the closing Eucharist prepared by David Kelly and the Irish group together with Damjan and Viljem from Slovenia. Then we celebrated St. Patrick's Day with Irish song and dance.

Next morning, on Monday we said good-bye to each other and returned home safely. Some of us remained in Dublin to celebrate St. Patrick's Day.

*Lehel Lészai*