

Irish Trust Talk



January 2007 No 75





A CELEBRATION OF 35 YEARS 2007

In 1972 a small group of fourteen young people with special needs and fourteen adult carers travelled on a pilgrimage holiday to Lourdes. This pilgrimage was unique in that the young people did not stay in any of the Lourdes hospitals or hospices but instead stayed in a hotel and enjoyed an active and rewarding holiday.

More than thirty years later the word is still spreading and the Irish Pilgrimage Trust's growing family now extends to over six thousand people from the island of Ireland who have travelled to Lourdes with the Trust.

In Ireland IHCPT has for many years organised holiday camps or 'Friendship Weeks' for young people with special needs.

On Easter Sunday over four hundred young people with special needs, accompanied by five hundred carers, board specially chartered aircraft to Lourdes to participate in a unique pilgrimage holiday. The large contingent is divided into small groups of eleven young people with eleven carers. During the week the liturgies associated with Lourdes are adapted to appeal to young people. Highlights of the week include the international Trust Mass where the Irish group is joined by five thousand other pilgrims from the UK, USA, Slovakia, Romania, the West Indies and Croatia in a liturgical celebration full of music and song. All carers pay their own fare and many of them return year after year to enjoy a week of companionship, fun and fulfilment.

Each June a second pilgrimage travels to Lourdes: staying in the beautiful facilities of HCPT in Hosanna House, this pilgrimage is principally for



adults. Hosanna House, high in the hills just outside Lourdes and near the village of Bartres, has the atmosphere of a comfortable family home with the facilities of an excellent hotel. Guests have the benefits of first class accommodation and cuisine, but also the freedom to make a cuppa or put their feet up as they wish.

Kilcuan is OUR HOUSE in Ireland. Opened in 1998 this purpose built house has been host to many groups in recent years: some from IHCPT and others from similar groups and organisations caring for adults and young people with special needs in Ireland and England. All rooms are en-suite and are suitable for people with special needs. Facilities include a large dining area, a fully equipped kitchen, TV, Video and music system. There is also a beautiful designed oratory. With its own wonderful groups Kilcuan is ideally located for visits to Galway, Knock, Connemara and the Burren using the specially adapted wheelchair friendly minibus.

Plans for the future include another development in the South East: another house which will welcome families with young people with special needs. Located in the picturesque corner of Wexford in the village of Duncannon this second home in Ireland will be a springboard to visit the sunny south east.





IHCPT The Irish Pilgrimage Trust
Kilcuan Clarenbridge Co. Galway
Tel: +353 (0) 91 796622 Fax: +353 (0) 91 796916
www.ihcpt.com info@ihcpt.com