

Irish Trust Talk

Autumn No 79



Benedict XVI: A Pilgrim in Lourdes

Pope John Paul II during his pilgrimage to Lourdes in his pontificate's final summer described Lourdes as the place where "the Virgin Mary... began a dialogue between heaven and earth". Kneeling at the Grotto of Massabielle, he told the crowds, "I feel deeply that I have reached the goal of my pilgrimage."

Pope Benedict during his pilgrimage to Lourdes in September spoke beautifully of the significance of Lourdes saying he felt "duty-bound" to participate in the jubilee celebrations, and that he came as a pilgrim.. We print some excerpts of the many sermons and reflections he gave during his weekend at Mary's special place.

Lourdes is one of the places chosen by God for his beauty to be reflected with particular brightness, hence the importance here of the symbol of light. From the fourth apparition onwards, on arriving at the grotto, Bernadette would light a votive candle each morning and hold it in her left hand for as long as the Virgin was visible to her. The Mother of God herself let it be known that she liked the touching homage of these thousands of torches, which since that time have continued to shine upon the rock of the apparition and give her glory. From that day, before the grotto, night and day, summer and winter, a burning bush shines out, aflame with the prayers of pilgrims and the sick, who bring their concerns and their needs, but above all their faith and their hope.

By coming here to Lourdes on pilgrimage, we wish to enter, following in Bernadette's footsteps, into **this extraordinary closeness between heaven and earth**, which never fails and never ceases to grow. In the course of the apparitions, it is notable that Bernadette prays the rosary under the gaze of Mary, who unites herself to her. at the moment of the doxology. When we pray the rosary Mary offers us her heart and her gaze in order to contemplate the life of her Son, Jesus Christ.

May Lourdes, the land of light, continue to be a school for learning to pray the Rosary, which introduces the disciples of Jesus, under the gaze of his Mother, into an authentic and cordial dialogue with his Master!

In this shrine at Lourdes, to which the Christians of the whole world have turned their gaze since **the Virgin Mary caused hope and love to shine** here by giving pride of place to the sick, the poor and the little ones, we are invited to discover the simplicity of our vocation: it is enough to love.

In this shrine at Lourdes...we are invited to discover the simplicity of our vocation: it is enough to love

The primary purpose of the shrine at Lourdes is to be a place of encounter with God in prayer and a place of service to our brothers and sisters, notably through the welcome given to the sick, the poor and all who suffer. **In this place, Mary comes to us as a mother,** always open to the needs of her children. Through the light which streams from her face, God's mercy is made manifest. Let us allow ourselves to be touched by her gaze, which tells us that we are all loved by God and never abandoned by him! Mary comes to remind us that prayer which is humble and intense, trusting and persevering, must have a central place in our Christian lives. Prayer is indispensable if we are to receive Christ's power. "People who pray are not wasting their time, even though the situation appears desperate and seems to call for action alone" (Deus Caritas Est, 36). To allow oneself to become absorbed by activity runs the risk of depriving prayer of its specifically Christian character and its true efficacy. The prayer of the Rosary, so dear to Bernadette and to Lourdes pilgrims, concentrates within itself the depths of the Gospel message. It introduces us to contemplation of the face of Christ. From this prayer of the humble, we can draw an abundance of graces.

Everything came from Christ, even Mary," added the Pope. "Everything came through Mary, even Christ.

Lourdes is like a light in the darkness of our groping to reach God. Mary opened there a gate towards a hereafter which challenges and charms us. **Maria, porta caeli!** I

Just before departing Lourdes Pope Benedict XVI spoke to all helpers who travel to Lourdes:

I should like to say to all the hospitaliers, the brancardiers and the carers who come from every diocese in France and from further afield, and who throughout the year attend the sick who come on pilgrimage to Lourdes, how much their service is appreciated. They are the arms of the servant Church.

The service of charity that you offer is a Marian service. Mary entrusts her smile to you, so that you yourselves may become, in faithfulness to her son, springs of living water. Whatever you do, you do in the name of the Church, of which Mary is the purest image. May you carry her smile to everyone!

Pope Benedict followed the Jubilee Way in Lourdes and afterwards spoke about the pilgrim walk:

When we follow the Jubilee Way in the footsteps of Bernadette, we are reminded of the heart of the message of Lourdes. Bernadette is the eldest daughter of a very poor family, with neither knowledge nor power, and in poor health. Mary chose her to transmit her message of conversion, prayer and penance, which fully accord with words of Jesus: "What you have hidden from the wise and understanding, you have revealed to babes" (Mt 11:25). On their spiritual journey, Christians too are called to render fruitful the grace of their Baptism, to nourish themselves with the Eucharist, to draw strength from prayer so as to bear witness and to express solidarity with all their fellow human beings. It is therefore a genuine catechesis that is being proposed to us in this way, under Mary's gaze. Let us allow her to instruct us too, and to guide us along the path that leads to the Kingdom of her Son!

The number of pilgrims who have completed the Jubilee Way to date:

December	19 676
January	7 289
February	59 153
March	55 932
April	123 566
May	201 658
June	128 410
July	178 531
August	237 603
Total on the 1st September:	1 029 774



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The Irish
Pilgrimage
Trust

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2008 - 150th Celebration in Lourdes

Lourdes 2008 was a special year in 150 years ago Our Lady appeared to Bernadette Soubirous beside the River Gave. During this year it is estimated that over 70,000 people from Ireland will have participated in the celebrations of Lourdes. While in more recent years the numbers may have dropped this special year has been a great year of pilgrimage. President Mary McAleese accompanied by Archbishop Martin of Dublin travelled to Lourdes and joined over 500 members of the Defence Forces in the Lourdes - the largest number of pilgrims in recent years. Many diocese throughout Ireland have experienced a similar rise in interest and pilgrimages have been booked out for a number of months.

150 years of Lourdes and HCPT and IHCPT have been a significant part of the great story that is Lourdes. The family of HCPT has had over 100 pilgrimages at easter time and of course countless groups who have stayed in Hosanna House. The Easter pilgrimage is the largest single English speaking pilgrimage and is held with great affection by all in the town of Lourdes and those associated with the Grotto and the Domaine. At a special

lunch hosted by the Bishop of Lourdes the chairperson of IHCPT and HCPT, Mr Gerry Martin and Dr Michael McGloin, Bishop John Rawsthorne and Bishop Dermot O'Mahony together with other members of both trusts were thanked by the Domaine for thier commitment to the work of Lourdes and their presence in such large numbers over the years. A specially commissioned plaque, with the logo of the 150th year, was presented by the Bishop.

A grace filled year for all who came to Lourdes and a wonderful celebration for the family of HCPT at Mary's special place.

Preparations for next year have begun already and regional and local meetings have commenced as we go to press. Bishop Willie Walsh of Killaloe will join us in Lourdes next year. We have been delighted over the past number of years to welcome different bishops from Ireland to celebrate the Benefactors' mass and to lead the pilgrimage with Bishop O'Mahony. This will be a first for Bishop Walsh and we look forward to his presence with us during Easter Week 2009.



Thanks to Bishop Christy Jones.

Pilgrimage 2008 again welcomed Bishop Christy Jones to Lourdes with IHCPT. A regular visitor to Lourdes with his own diocese and now a regular face with IHCPT Bishop Jones celebrated the Trust Mass in St Bernadette's Basilica. A great occasion of prayer and song Bishop Jones led the celebration joined by Bishop Dermot O'Mahony and the priests of the Trust. Thanks to Bishop Christy for the time and energy he gave to the pilgrimage groups. A special word of appreciation from the groups from the North West who enjoy great support from Bishop Christy at home at many of their functions and gatherings. Great to see you in Lourdes with us.

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and
IHCPT



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They are important valued partners with IHCPT

APPLICATION FORM

APPLICATION FOR OUR 2009 PILGRIMAGE

Now is the time to send in applications for our pilgrimage next Easter. Over the years the Trust has developed different types of groups each geared to meet the special needs of the young people. All groups have a Group Leader, group nurse and chaplain. Each group is assigned a doctor. All activities are done together as a group. Each group numbers about twenty-two young people and carers.

IHCPT - The Irish Pilgrimage Trust welcomes applications from young people of any religious, ethnic or racial background. For our 2009 Pilgrimage we shall have:

Groups for young people with a physical disability, aged 9 to 18.

Groups for young people with an intellectual disability, aged 11 to 21.

Three Family Groups, for very seriously ill children under the age of 9.

These children must be accompanied by a parent. The carers involved with these groups have skills to look after very sick children and to work with family members.

Two Jet Set groups for young adults, aged 20-25, with an illness or a physical disability.

Three Jet Set groups for adults with an intellectual disability, aged 21-30.

These groups prepare their own pilgrimage programme.

We regret that we cannot consider any young person who has been on an IHCPT pilgrimage on or after 2005. Any young person who has been to Lourdes with another organisation or pilgrimage is welcome to apply.

Application forms have already been sent to schools, organisations, institutions and individual contacts all over Ireland. You can also get an Application Form from our office.

IHCPT - The Irish Pilgrimage Trust
Kilcuan
Clarenbridge
Co Galway

Tel: 091-796622 Fax: 091-796916 Email: info@ihcpt.com

The closing date for completed applications is 31 October, 2008.

Please Note: Completion of an Application Form does not guarantee selection.

Change of Editor of the Irish Trust Talk

This is the last newsletter that Rev Richard Scriven and Mr Desmond Keane will edit. Appointed editors of The Irish Trust Talk in 1998 they have been responsible for the publication of the newsletter twice annually over the past ten years. This work will now be done by the office staff at Kilcuan. Richard and Desmond in handing on this work extend a big thank you to all who have helped with the work over the years. The newsletter is circulated to over 9000 homes and is an important contact with helpers and young people who are IHCPT. It is a record of the work of the Trust both here in Ireland and in France. During the years Richard and Desmond have also included articles from other sources reflecting the overall mission of the Church. As they conclude their work they wish all well in the continued work of the newsletter and the Trust.

Mailing List

The work of maintaining the Mailing List for the newsletter is done at our office in Kilcuan.

If you no longer wish to receive the Irish Trust Talk please write to us by post or telephone or email quoting the your name and the address on the Address Label and we will ensure that your details are removed from the mailing list. If you are receiving more than one copy please contact the office.

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Annual Ring of Kerry Charity Cycle - Lourdes Cycle Reunion



The 25th Annual Ring of Kerry Charity Cycle took place on Saturday 5th July 2008. More than 2000 intrepid cyclists were blessed with a rare fine summers day as they tackled the testing 112 mile route.

This amazing event has raised over 2.5 million to date and one of the four charities to benefit this year was our own IHCPT.

The La Brise tops were in great abundance on the day with many cyclists showing that they had not lost any of their wonderful fitness since Lourdes. In fact a unique aspect of this "Ring" was that it coincided with the reunion of the Lourdes 2008 cycle - many thanks to Timo our chief organiser. The reunion Gala Dinner was held on the Saturday night and it was wonderful to see people these from all over the country and even from as far as England .

Many thanks, also to Pat and Phil Jordan who made a special effort to attend. It was great to have the opportunity to host so many great cyclists in the Kingdom and show them what real hills are like. Happy cycling to all.



Cyclists Eamonn Dunne and Eamonn Murphy pictured with Gabriel Higgins after completing the cycle to Lourdes

Manual Handling Courses

Why not be part of our team here in Ireland?

In recent years best practice in Health and Safety and the concern for our helpers and young people has seen a large number of our volunteers completing a lifting and moving course. To facilitate this requirement throughout the the regions we have trained Instructors who give the courses for us. If you could help us with the work, have a little time on your hands and can make yourself available for training and become an instructor we would be delighted to hear from you. Courses run over two weeks. Please contact the office in Kilcuan for further details and information.

Can you name any of these cyclists? Answers to Kilcuan.



IHCPT on RTE

Well done to all who were involved in the Mass which was broadcast on RTE 1 on Sunday 31st Autust. Celebrated by Frs Michael and Joe McGrath group 166 and 108 provided the music and prayers for the Sunday Mass. An enjoyable experience for all - lots of hard work and and early start for helpers and young people, it was great. A very simple liturgy that reflected very well the liturgies which are the hallmark of an IHCPT Group. You could have been in Lourdes! Gerry Sheehan, a regular helper and musician during Lourdes week was the musical director. Pictured below are the two groups at the RTE studio.



The Spring



Water has always been a most important part of a visit to Lourdes. Whether it is to go to the baths, drink from the fountains at the side of the grotto or to avoid a shower of rain water has shaped the days of every pilgrim at Lourdes. In this Jubilee year we reflect on the power of water and its significance as part of the pilgrimage to Mary's special place on Earth.



The heart of Lourdes beats at the Grotto; but the heart of the Grotto is the spring. The discovery of this spring is itself at the heart of the apparitions. The spring is therefore at the heart of the heart.

We are 25th February 1858. The day before, the Lady asked Bernadette – and asks us through Bernadette – to pray for sinners. She calls for penance. On 25th Bernadette is asked to perform a specific act: “Go, drink at the spring, and wash yourself there”. As no spring is flowing in the Grotto, Bernadette naturally heads for the Gave. The Lady, however, makes a sign and points towards the back of the Grotto. There follows a whole series of comings and goings which Bernadette accomplishes on her knees on the sloping and rocky floor of the Grotto. Finally, at the back of the Grotto, Bernadette unearths a small pool of muddy water with her hands, which she is unable to drink it is so disgusting. When Bernadette recounts this episode to the Community in Nevers on 8th July 1866 the Mistress of Novices will observe to the other sisters: “You can judge from that how little she was mortified”. She adds, addressing Bernadette: “You were not really mortified”. To which the newcomer replied: “It’s just that the water was really dirty”. After three unsuccessful efforts Bernadette can finally drink, but her face is smeared with mud. In the hours that follow, the pool of water spreads and clarifies to be transformed into an abundant and limpid source, which has never ceased to flow for the past one hundred and fifty years.



*The heart of Lourdes
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The scene caused consternation. How did the seer, whose countenance was so beautiful when the Lady appeared to her, become this “little brat”, as described by one of the women of Lourdes designated by the Curé as an observer? During the afternoon of the same day people come to the Grotto and drink the water which has now become clear. Some even carry it home. Thanks to it Louis Bouriette recovers his eyesight, and Catherine Latapie the use of her paralysed right hand. The message of the Lady made no allusion to the sick or to cures; it was concerned with penance. The Gospel read at the Mass that day, Thursday of the second week of Lent, told of the miracle worked by Jesus on the daughter of the woman from Canaan, a pagan; a providential coincidence? All of the first cures in Lourdes are connected with the water of Massabielle, to the point where Bernadette has to clarify things: this water would have no effect without faith and prayer. It is not miraculous in itself, but the Lord can use it as a sign of his actions. Did He not send the man who was born blind to wash himself at the pool of Siloe? The Lord does not scorn external material signs, even though He can cure purely by His word: to cure a deaf and dumb person He made mud with His saliva and spread it on his eyes and tongue. The Lord, however, is in no way restricted to such and such a visible sign: many cures will have no connection with the water, but rather the Eucharist; others will result purely from prayer.

The symbol of the spring has strong meaning for a Christian. Significantly the Virgin did not make a spring flow; she allowed Bernadette to discover it. There is a hidden spring in all: the image and likeness of God covered and muddied by sin. We are unable to find it unless someone points it out.

The spring and the rock of Massabielle are linked. There are strong links to scripture: Moses striking the rock so that the water flows forth and relieves the people in the desert (Exodus 17); In the vision of the prophet Ezekiel the water flowing from the Temple of Jerusalem and bringing life everywhere it goes, even making the Dead Sea fresh (Ezekiel 47); Christ announcing that out of His heart “will flow rivers of living water” (John 19:34). In this interpretation the water is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. The Lady told Bernadette to “drink”. Jesus had said to the Samaritan woman: “but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty” (John 4:14). “Let the one who believes in me drink ... Now He said this about the Spirit” (John 7:37-39)

Lastly when we consider the other command of the Lady “...wash yourself there”, the spring will evoke Baptism, and that new plunge into the living water of Baptism which is

Reconciliation. With such an evocative strength for all men, and especially for Christians, it is not surprising that Lourdes water is what the pilgrims prefer to take home with them to keep carefully or share it with others.

Around the world

Lourdes water is known throughout the world, as most of the pilgrims bring some back with them, or have it sent from Lourdes. This is not the only reason, however. In fact many of the replicas of the Lourdes Grotto have copies of the taps which give access to the water of the Spring. This is the case, notably, in the gardens of the Vatican. Other replicas do not have the taps but allow pilgrims to have access to the water near the Grotto. This is the case in Argentina, at Santos Lugares, in Sydney, Australia, in Benin at Dassa, in Chili at Santiago, in China at Pu Dong, in Korea at Taigu, in the United States in Houston, in Japan at Hiroshima, in the Philippines at Manila, in Vietnam at Hué... Irrespective of the taps the pilgrims carry out the wishes of the Virgin Mary. Wherever they may be they will therefore “drink and wash”. And, as in Lourdes, some will claim to receive the grace of a cure, experienced after this gesture.

LOURDES JUBILEE YEAR 2008

The Jubilee Year of Lourdes began on 8th December 2007 and will continue through to the end of 2008. Marking the 150th anniversary of the apparitions at Lourdes by Our Lady to Bernadette Soubirous the Lourdes authorities have prepared for this special year of celebration over the past number of years. Special themes highlighting different and significant aspects of Lourdes were the themes for pilgrimages in the years leading up to the Jubilee Year.

Significant construction and renovation work was carried out to make the Domaine of Lourdes ready for this year of celebration. Most notable were the frescos that were commissioned to illustrate the Mysteries of Light (the Institution of the Eucharist, Christ's Baptism in the Jordan, the Transfiguration, the Proclamation of the Kingdom and the Wedding at Cana.) - the new mysteries of the Rosary that were given to the Church by Pope John Paul II. These beautiful frescos are the work of Fr Marko Ivan Rupnick from Slovenia. He is one of the most important church artists of our generation and has been involved in many commissions over the past few decades. Mgr Perrier, Bishop of Tarbes and Lourdes wanted these mosaics in homage to John Paul II, and their unveiling on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception on 8th December 2007 marked the opening of the Jubilee. They complete the fifteen mosaics already present inside the Basilica, giving its full dimension to the prayer of the Rosary according to the Holy Father's wish. The place chosen was, by the way, where he had meditated on the "Mysteries of Light" on 14th August 2004.

During the Jubilee year pilgrims were invited to walk a specially prepared *Jubilee Walk*. There were four stages to the Jubilee Way. These places were significant in the life of St Bernadette: the parish Church where she was baptised; the Cachot (prison) where the family lived; The Hospital Oratory where Bernadette made her first Holy Communion on the 3rd June 1858; and, the Grotto where Our Lady appeared to Bernadette. During Easter Week 2008 many of the IHCPT groups made this pilgrim walk.

Another change to Lourdes prepared for the Jubilee Year was the new Stations of the Cross. Placed in the Prairie these beautifully sculpted stations echo the Way of the Cross and are now much more accessible for those with mobility difficulties than the High Stations.

During the year the Lourdes authorities also invited various pilgrimage groups to share their experience, faith and witness on twelve missions addressing the needs of the Church in these opening years of the 3rd millennium. The family of HCPT with the Barcelona Hospitalité are hosting a conference in November entitled: **I have called you by your name - Disability in the Mission of the Church**. An impressive group of speakers has been gathered, and the theme will be explored through talks, discussion, liturgy and dance. The range of speakers include Jean Vanier, Stephen McDonald of the American Trust, Fr Michael Drumm and Fr Nicholas King SJ. Further booking information available at www.lourdes2008.com or www.hcpt.org.uk or from The Sanctuaries or HCPT – The Pilgrimage Trust



Gerry Martin and family complete the Jubilee Way

IHCPT Cycle to Lourdes

A unique pilgrimage by bike

The cycle through France to Lourdes that takes place every two years is now an essential and important part of the life of the Trust. From small beginnings in the 1980s the number has grown each year and is a vital aspect of the Trust today. While the money is important - we need it to keep going from year to year - this cycle is also a pilgrimage. The goal for all who cycle is the Grotto. The journey is the means to the end. And, along the way stories are shared, lives are intertwined and the grace of God flows like the river at the Grotto. Congratulations to all who were part of the cycle in 2008 and here's an invitation: why not

consider being part of the cycle in 2010? The dates are set: from March 27th – April 4th 2010. The official launch is next Easter in Lourdes, but there is nothing to stop you starting now. If you are interested in taking part you can contact Pat at the office in Kilcuan on 091 796900 or email: patjordan@ihcpt.com. The Cycle 2008 reunion was held in Killarney (organized by Tim O'Brien) in conjunction with the *Ring of Kerry Cycle* who have generously nominated IHCPT as one of their Charities. Well done to all and a big thanks to all who participated in this cycle and to the generosity of the people of *the kingdom* once again.

A NEW YEAR BEGINS

As we begin a new year in IHCPT we welcome all new group leaders and regional officers. IHCPT has seven regions and during the year a number of meetings are organised. There are two national meetings - one in September and one in March. At regional level there are generally about five meetings. Each group will meet seven or eight times each year and of course also give a commitment to fundraising events. This is a wonderful commitment from many people to the work of IHCPT right throughout the year. A big clap on the back for those who are retiring now from their role and a cead mile failte to those who are taking up the challenge and leadership role at national, regional and group level. Be assured of the appreciation of all in the family of IHCPT and the support of all in the pilgrimage year ahead.

2009 The Year of Bernadette.

The Lourdes authorities have decided that the theme for the year in Lourdesd next year will be *The Way of Bernadette*.

IHCPT WALK TO SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA 2009

It is proposed that following the success of the IHCPT Compostela Walk in 2007, another walk will be organised for 2009 running from the 27th June 2009 – 4th July 2009. The proceeds of the walk will be for the work of the Trust and specifically for the South East Project.

Two routes are planned for 2009. For group One the route will be as it was in 2007. Route Two is aimed at those who walked in 2007 or who have previously walked the Camino there is the option of walking another part of the Camino from Ponferrada to Portomarín, a journey of 130k. This walk will take in O Cebreiro, standing at over 4,000ft. Group Two will meet up with Group One in Lavacolla and the final day will be walked together.

The cost of the walk is 500 and this will include:

Bus Transfers
Dinner, Bed and Breakfast for 7 Days

Santiago Passport

Price will not include:

Flights
Personal and Travel Insurance
Lunches

We will be asking all participants to raise 1,000.

ROUTE 1

The group will be approximately 20 – 25 people.

Arrive into Santiago Airport, meet guide and bus transfer to Sarria (1.5 hour Transfer)

Sunday
Sarria – Portomarín 22k

Monday
Portomarín - Palas de Rei 25k

Tuesday
Palas de Rei – Melide 15k

Wednesday
Melide – Arzúa 14k

Thursday
Arzúa – Lavacolla 29k

Friday
Lavacolla – Santiago 12k

Total 118k

ROUTE 2

The group will be approximately 20 – 25 people.

Arrive into Santiago Airport, meet guide and bus transfer to Portomarín (3 hour Transfer)

Sunday
Ponferrada - Villafranca del Bierzo 23k

Monday
Villafranca del Bierzo - O Cebreiro 30k

Tuesday
O Cebreiro – Triacastela 21k

Wednesday
Triacastela – Sarria 22k

Thursday
Sarria – Portomarín 22k

Friday
Lavacolla – Santiago 12k

Total 120k



Group 309



Group 309 travelled for the first time to Lourdes in 2008. Based in Belfast the group invited young adults to join the IHCPT pilgrimage to Lourdes. Gemma Shannon was group leader and here she writes about the experience. The theme for 2008 was Called By Name and Eimear Shannon wrote the poem as her reflection fo the week in Lourdes.



Group 309... Called by name

Well our journey in Lourdes has come to an end,
But with us we leave with great memories and friends.
Together we've made up a fabulous gang,
Group 309 has begun with a bang.

First, our leader Gemma, what a great job she has done,
She's special; she's kind, energetic and fun.
Then there is Paddy, he's number two,
One of life's real gents he's honest and true.

Next there's the medics, that's Michael and Cat,
For their care and commitment, I take off my hat.
They've looked after us well and kept us all fit,
They never complained, not even a bit.

We have Marty and Martin, James Woods and the Tweed,
Four big hearted men that every group needs.
Then there's Nicole and Rebecca, Alice and Claire,
When we needed their love they've always been there.

Two special "sisters" joined us each day,
They were Catherine and Katie whose voices blew us away.

We've our 9 special angels all sent from above,
Let's start with Jo-Jo; she's our wee "Love"
Then there is Jimbo, that dude he can dance,
And our wee Siobhan, she's looking romance!

We have Colleen who's beautiful in every single way,
And Kevin who's charmed us every single day.
Then there is Bronagh and her inquisitive mind,
And Peter the legend; he's one of a kind.

Next there is Eileen, she's special, a real smiley Joe,
Lastly there Aidan, who's smiling everywhere we go.
One name that's noticeably not yet on our list,
That name is Eimear, Gemma's dear little sis.

Last but not least, Fr. Kevin, what can I say?
You've lead us in prayer each and every day,
You're a treasured member of the pack,
But with the forgotten passport and sleep-in,
you may not be back!!

Together we've made up Group 309,
Together we came. Together we shine.

What a year!

Easter 2008 was the first year Group 309 travelled to Lourdes. I had previously travelled with Group 306 and have many wonderful memories from my experiences with them. I knew there was a big demand for a Jet Set in the Northern region and so set about organising Group 309.

Many times I asked myself, "what am I doing?" and I wondered why I had ever left my old group. I had so many friends there and I worried that maybe this new group would not be as successful... I voiced my concerns to one of these friends, and her reply was "this time next year, there will be twice as many people here who will have had an amazing experience..."

At the end of the week this year, during our last night prayer together, I looked around the group. Everyone was laughing and crying, sharing their highlights and most memorable experiences from the week we'd spent together. I could see that my friend had been right and Group 309 had been a huge success. I have formed many new deep friendships and have enjoyed watching the Irish Pilgrimage Trust family grow and grow.

Roll on Easter 2009!



An Invitation to You

October, 2008

Dear Friend of IHCPT,

I am taking this opportunity to write to you on behalf of the trust.

The Trust thankfully is strong and vibrant and continuing to grow and prosper. We have more people than ever wishing to travel to Lourdes with us at Easter time and to Hosanna House in June, both carers and guests. Our house at Kilcuan is a great facility for both the Trust and other caring organisations providing a great holiday spot for our guests and respite for their families and carers. We are now about to embark on a new holiday home located at Kilrane in Wexford, near Rosslare Harbour. This house will be available to groups of up to 18 people or families for holidays. All these developments can be reviewed on our website www.ihcpt.com.

One of our greatest challenges each year is the dreaded fundraising and in the current times we believe that this will get more difficult. Also our costs of getting to Lourdes are increasing faster due to the increase in fuel prices. Traditionally, most of the fundraising as you know has been done by the groups and this is now more difficult than ever. In an effort to share this responsibility we are asking the wider Trust family to get involved. This can be done either passively or actively. We attach a standing order form for anyone who might wish to make a donation monthly or annually. Any annual payment of over €250 is eligible for a tax refund to The Irish Pilgrimage Trust. Alternatively if anyone wishes to get involved you can contact HQ, any regional officer or group leader in your area. Names and contact details can be got from us in Kilcuan.

Many thanks for taking the time to read this letter.

Yours sincerely,



Bernadette O'Connell,
National Co-ordinator

THE IRISH PILGRIMAGE TRUST

SUPPORTERS CLUB

Please fill in all the details below to help us keep our records accurate and return the form to:

National Coordinator, Irish Pilgrimage Trust, Kilcuan, Clarinbridge, Co. Galway.

Name: Group Number: (If applicable)

Home address:

.....

Telephone:(Home/Work)

Please include me/us on the mailing list to receive a copy of the IHCPT newsletter.
Yes/No

I/we would like to make the following contribution to the **IRISH PILGRIMAGE TRUST** fund raising

By pledging to pay €..... monthly/annually. Please circle as appropriate

I/we have enclosed an annual cheque for the draw:

I/we have completed the attached Banker's Order

Monthly Contributions	Annual Contribution
€5.00	€60
€10.00	€120
€25.00	€300
Other:€.....	Other: €.....

Eligible for Tax Refund to The Trust.

Any annual payment in excess of €250, see covering letter.

*Please complete the top of this form and return to Kilcuan.
The section below should be completed and given to your Bank.*

BANKERS ORDER

To: The Manager,

Bank: Branch:

I/we authorise you to debit my/our account number:

With the sum of EUR.....

For the credit of Irish Pilgrimage Trust **ACCOUNT NO: 46961-183**

Allied Irish Banks, Tralee, Co Kerry. Sort Code: 93-63-91

Please charge these payments to my/our account monthly/annually commencing with a payment on the 1st..... 200... Please do not charge my/our account any fees as the IHCPT is a Revenue approved "Eligible Charity" number CHY5992.

Account Name:

Authorised Signature(s)

Date:

This cancels all previous standing orders in favour of IHCPT – The Irish Pilgrimage Trust.

J u b i l e e Y e a r 2 0 0 8



The Northern Ball was a great success



Croatia grow from strength to strength; travelling by bus there were three groups in Lourdes in 2008



Best wishes to John and Caroline who were married recently.



Friendship week visit Westport House



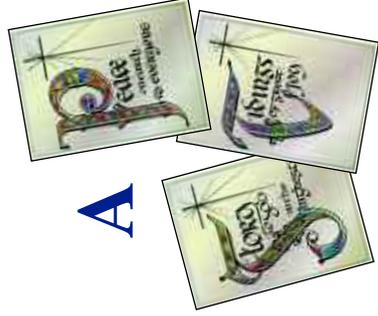
Group 162 at the Aquarium



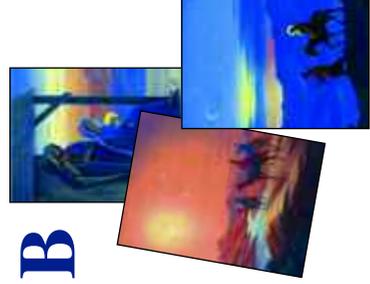
Jet Set at the Trust Mass

CHRISTMAS CARDS 2008

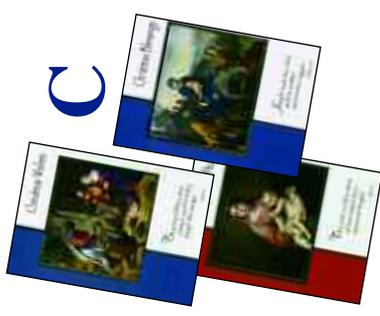
Christmas cards are a very important source of advertising and income for IHCPT. Our range is simple and uncomplicated and we hope that they will serve you well this year as you send greetings at Christmas. Thank you for your donations and your purchase. It makes a huge difference.



B



A



C



D

E



F

Number of Packs required	Ref	Title of Card	Cost Excluding Postage	Total Including Postage
	A	Celtic €5.00 (£3.50) per 10 pack	€	
	B	Nativity Scene €5.00 (£3.50) per 10 pack	€	
	C	Christmas Blessings €5.00 (£3.50) per 10 pack	€	
	D	Traditional €5.00 (£3.50) per pack	€	
	E	Rejoice €2.00 per pack of 5	€	
	F	Children's Card €5.00 per pack of 5	€	
Postage and Packing Prices (Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland)				
For 1 pack add €1.35				
For 3 packs add €3.85				
For 7-12 packs add €7.50				
In the case that your choice is not available please indicate what other option, in order of preference, should we forward from the above selection <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>				
Purchase total				
Postage				
Donation				
Total:				
Limited stock of some designs Assorted designs may vary from pack to pack				

Please use **BLOCK CAPITALS**

NAME

ADDRESS

POSTAL CODE

IHCPT
The Irish Pilgrimage Trust
Kilcuan
Clarenbridge
Co. Galway
Tel. (091) 796622
Fax (091) 796916

Please send this order form together with completed label and payment to Kilcuan