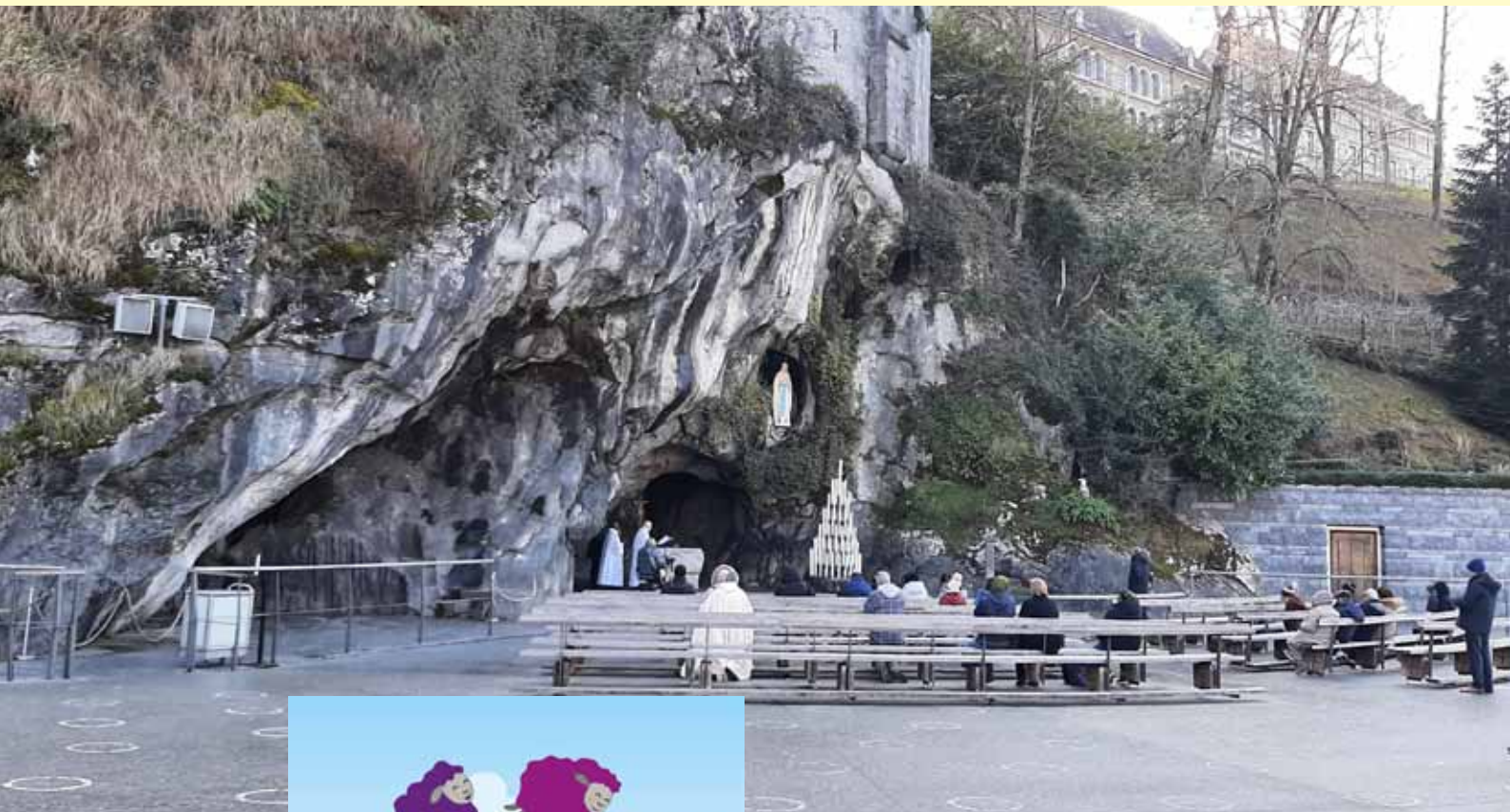




Irish Trust Talk



**“Come, just as you are, Come!”
Our return to Lourdes, EASTER 2023**



**Our Lourdes Theme 2023
THE GOOD SHEPHERD**



The Irish Pilgrimage Trust, Kilcuan, Clarinbridge, Galway
+353 91 796622 www.irishpilgrimagetrust.com
Charity Registration Number 20009953 CHY (Revenue) No. 5992

**Issue 105
Spring 2023**



The Irish Pilgrimage Trust

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The Irish Pilgrimage Trust



The Trust was established in 1972 to provide special pilgrimage holidays to Lourdes for children and young people with special needs. The Trust also provide special summer holidays for people with special needs to Hosanna House in Lourdes and at our purpose built holiday homes - Kilcuan in Clarinbridge, Galway and Cois Cuain, Kiltrane, Wexford.

Check out our website on www.irishpilgrimagetrust.com for more details or call +353 91 796622

The Irish Pilgrimage Trust is a Registered Charity - C.R.N. 20009953; Revenue Chy. No. 5992



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The Irish Pilgrimage Trust Safeguarding



**Designated Liaison Person
Bernadette Connolly**

Person Designated with responsibility for the safety, welfare and protection of our guests

Please consider DONATING to The Irish Pilgrimage Trust

You can DONATE online by visiting our website
www.irishpilgrimagetrust.com/donate

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email to info@irishpilgrimagetrust.com

or

Contact us by 'phone on +353 91 796622

You can support your local Group by simply pressing the
DONATE button on our website and make your
Donation on Just Giving and note the Group No.

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A Word from the Chair

Charles Digney



As I write this note I look out my window and can see that we are moving away from the dark, dreary winter months. The evenings are getting longer and there are signs of new life with snow drops and daffodils starting to appear and new lambs in the fields.

It reminds me of our organisation. Last summer the Trust started to reawaken after 2 years being shut down with some groups going to Lourdes and others coming to Kilcuan on friendship weeks. September brought a burst of energy when our group leaders all came together to plan for Easter 2023. There has been lots of hard work put in by volunteers throughout the country and everything is starting to take shape for Easter. Guests have been selected and group visits are taking place, flights and hotels are booked and this Easter we plan to take a pilgrimage of about 800 to Lourdes which is wonderful. Our Lady called us to come to Lourdes on Pilgrimage and we are answering that call.

While there is lots to be positive about there remain many challenges facing our organisation. As with everything costs have risen substantially particularly our flights and hotels. We are also always on the look out for new volunteers and particularly Doctors and nurses. Please spread the word !

To all our groups whether you are preparing for Easter 2023, summer pilgrimage, friendship weeks or Easter 2024, thank you for your continued support, hard work and sacrifices. A special thank you to all our supporters whether you are a cyclist training for our next cycle to Lourdes or the individual who makes a donation each year or sells a few raffle tickets on our behalf, your support is greatly appreciated.

No doubt Easter week in Lourdes will be full of colour and excitement however a very special part of the week is our Friday morning mass from the Grotto in which we remember particularly our friends who are deceased. They moulded the Trust and we will always be grateful to them. For those not able to be in Lourdes please join with us for this special occasion via the Lourdes webcam and the Trust social media pages.



We have all been touched by the Trust in some form or other and all being well over the next few months many more people will be blessed with experiencing the Trust for the first time and will create new lasting memories.

Charles

Our Lady of Lourdes, Pray for us

St Bernadette, Pray for us.

RISE AND SHINE!



The very special Mural in Kilcuan depicting Noah and his Arky Arky

RISE AND SHINE

Anthem of the Trust

“Rise and Shine” is the official anthem of The Irish Pilgrimage Trust and HCPT’s Easter week in Lourdes – and that’s official!

The melody can be traced back to an American folk song from the 1930s, a slower spiritual tune called “Jacob’s ladder” but the origins of the lyrics we know and use are not entirely clear.



It may have been developed over the years in churches and youth groups around Britain and America, or it may have been invented by helpers in the early days while entertaining children on the train station at Boulogne maritime! Whatever the origin, it now has a firm position as the highlight at both the

Trust Mass and the Torchlight Procession in Lourdes at Easter.



Versions of the song have appeared at many places over the years, including appearing at least once in an episode of The Simpsons (“Homer the Heretic”) and is a popular entry in many Scouts / Guides campfire songbooks. It is also available in many other languages and is sung with the same energy and enthusiasm.

So, sing, all together now, ***The Lord said to Noah, there’s gonna be a floody, floody.....***

(Extract from GOLDEN MEMORIES, Our Anniversary Book, celebrating 50 years of the Trust - available from the Trust office - phone +353 91 796622)

A GROUP LEADER'S LETTER

Margaret Goff, former Group Leader of Group 164 and Friendship Week 7 recently wrote to the National Coordinator of the Trust about her involvement and experience. Margaret continues to be a great supporter and advocate for the Trust.

This is an extract from Margaret's letter, reproduced here by her kind permission.

Feb 2023

Dear Ber,

The Trust is a wonderful organisation and I am so privileged to be part of it. I have met so many wonderful people and made great friends with carers, group leaders, youth groups, medical staff but above all the guests that I have the privilege to share both Lourdes and Friendship Weeks with.



Margaret Goff - enjoying a moment with one of the pets during a visit to the Pet Farm with her Friendship Week group.

For something I became involved in through a casual remark with three friends one day going to Dublin on the train my experience has been so enjoyable. Seeing the guest enjoying themselves, maybe first time away from home and it's a big undertaking for the families to see their special child go away with a group and only briefly meet them beforehand, and for many families no one can look after their child like they can. When

you come back and you get lovely messages from the family saying how much their child enjoyed their experience make all the effort so worthwhile.

You all are a wonderful team in the office and always there for support when required and nothing was too much an effort. As group leader going to Lourdes I have to mention Maureen RIP. I remember one guest and we were down to the wire on trying to get a passport. Everything seemed to be working against us, I rang Maureen and said it look like he won't be able to go but there always seem to be those extra few hours to keep trying. It worked out in the end and the guest got to travel and had a great week.

The Friendship Weeks in Kilcuan are so enjoyable and it's a great introduction to give guests an idea into the week away in Lourdes. A special note of thanks to Mary Clancy who, from the first moment I went to Kilcuan and met everyone it was a wonderful experience. Wishing you all the best for the future and hope to see you all soon.

Best Wishes,

Margaret



Margaret Goff - on the right - with Mary Clancy, centre, blue jacket, and guests during a Friendship Week Group outing

From LOURDES to BERLIN!

My name is Máire Connolly.

I am 19 years old and I have Down Syndrome. I love Lourdes.

My Mum wants to tell you a story about me!



Máire Connolly - A Portrait by Celine O'Loan

Máire was first picked to travel to Lourdes with group 125 in 2017. The group leader and group nurse came to the house to visit, chat and get to know her. She also got to meet the full group at the Group 125 Pre-Pilgrimage Group meeting.

As I have been going to Lourdes since 2007, Máire would have been familiar with hearing about the place. I always go to Lourdes a few days before everyone else, so I was not around on the morning of Easter Sunday when group 125 were gathering in Kilcuan to get the bus to Shannon airport. Máire phoned me at



Máire meets her Mum Ber on her way to the Irish Trust Mass in Lourdes, 2017

3am to let me know that she was planning to go to see the group off, but said she was NOT going to Lourdes. She did not like the idea of going off for a week with a

From LOURDES to BERLIN!

group of strangers.

Dad and Máire went to Kilcuan at 3am to say goodbye to group 125 as they got ready to head off to Shannon airport. Máire said goodbye to them and got back into the car – no way was she getting on that bus!

Dad got back in the car, the group headed off on the bus minus one carer - Siobhan from group 125 came home with them and chatted to Máire while dad went to wake up Máire's brother. Máire got on really well with Siobhan and the four of them got in the car and dad drove to Shannon airport to meet the rest of Group 125.



By the time they got to Shannon, Máire and Siobhan were getting on great and Máire was happy out getting on that plane.

She had a wonderful week with group 125 in the Solitude hotel, going to the Irish Mass and the Trust Mass and the Grotto, going to Gavarnie, walking around Lourdes and doing all the fun things that our groups do in Lourdes. She shared a room with another

guest and had to follow the rules of the group and she absolutely thrived in the environment.

She came home a different girl! She was more confident, more independent and was full of news of the fun she had. Nothing before or since has compared with that experience and she is going back this year and is absolutely over the moon to be going.



Máire showing intense concentration as she practices her routine at a training camp in Dublin on 4th March 2023

It is really difficult to convey just how life changing an experience going to Lourdes was for Máire, but it was a truly magnificent experience for her in her journey to adulthood.

She has now been selected to represent Ireland in Artistic Gymnastics in the Special Olympics World Games in Berlin in June this year. As part of this, she will spend 2 weeks with Team Ireland in Berlin away from family. She is delighted to be part of that experience and faces it with confidence and anticipation because of the maturity and confidence she developed on her trip to Lourdes.

National Group Leaders Meeting

National Group Leaders Meeting, 17th Sep 2022 - Report

On 17th September 2022 The Irish Pilgrimage Trust convened its first National Group Leaders meeting since 2019. The three year suspension of public gatherings and face-to-face meetings due to the pandemic has been a huge challenge for the Trust. Despite everything, there was an excellent response and all regions were represented at the gathering that took place in our special home, Kilcuan, in Galway. While the occasion was a significant relief, it was also reflective of the mood within the Trust to get back to business. Everyone was anxious to get the process of reviving our groups, planning for Easter 2023 and selecting our guests underway.

The meeting was opened by our new Trust Chairperson Charles Digney. Charles paid a very



Charles Digney, Chairperson addressing the National Group Leaders meeting

special tribute to past Chairperson Helen Kirwan, whose inspired leadership steered the organisation safely through one of the most challenging periods for the Trust, the Covid-19 pandemic. Charles also reflected on the many cherished Trust friends who passed away during this period and expressed our sympathies to families and friends.

After outlining the agenda for the meeting our National Coordinator Bernadette Connolly gave an overview of the planning and preparations that have taken place for our Easter 2023 pilgrimage return to Lourdes. One of the primary actions has been the review of guest applications and dealing with new applications that have been received into the Trust office. She also reported that securing flights for the Easter trip was proving very difficult as the charter market had reduced significantly, fewer planes were available and

it is extremely difficult for them to provide flight crews.

Bernadette informed the meeting that all our Trust groups have engaged with the Office in recent months. However, a number of groups have opted to defer their return to full activity and will not be joining the 2023 Easter pilgrimage. At least 35 Trust groups will travel to Lourdes at Easter 2023, including 3 Family groups, 6 Jet Set groups, Forever Friends group and 22 general groups and 2 youth and 1 Service group. It is expected that the Trust pilgrimage will have almost 800 pilgrims including our 275 special guests.

The Trust's special invited speaker Dr. Brian McClean gave a very informative and engaging presentation on Autism and discussed many of the difficulties we as carers and those with autism encounter.

His presentation was both enthralling and enlightening for a very attentive audience. There were excellent exchanges during the Q & A session that followed.

Trust Chaplain Fr. Michael Murphy made a presentation and outlined the new Mission, Vision, Values and Objects of the Trust. A detailed contribution on relevant Medical matters was presented by our Trust Nurse Mary Dunnion and Trust Doctor, Dr John Porteous.

Later, Karl Goulding, the Trust's Honorary Treasurer outlined the changing economic environment that our organization faces in the period ahead. Karl provided some stark facts on the impact of inflation and rising costs that the Trust must meet as we move forward with our plans for Easter 2023 and beyond. These include increased annual insurance premiums, property maintenance and renewals costs, and particularly the



Mary Dunnion, Trust Nurse addressing the meeting

National Group Leaders Meeting Sep 2022



L to R - Charles Digney, Trust Chairperson, Dr. Brian McClean, Guest Speaker, Bernadette Connolly, National Coordinator

very significant increases in the cost of flights and hotel accommodation. As fundraising is the sole source of income for the Trust, the Board of Trustees had no other option but to increase the volunteers fare and further increase the fundraising targets for our groups. The meeting engaged in a detailed discussion following Karl's presentation and many useful contributions

relating to fundraising were shared within the group.

Trish Gallagher, Trustee and the Trust's Safeguarding Officer gave a detailed presentation on the updated Trust Safeguarding Policy. This presentation served as a timely reminder of the Policy and its importance in all aspects of Trust activities. The requirement for volunteers to complete the Trust's online Safeguarding Training was discussed and that this training must be completed before the Easter pilgrimage.

The meeting also provided an important occasion for social interaction and reconnection with old friends after such a long time. The bond of support for one another is a key aspect of the National Group Leaders meeting and this event proved to be a very special gathering indeed.

James McHugh



FUNDRAISING -to Fund our Activities

Our Trust Groups across the country have been extremely busy in recent weeks fund raising for our upcoming Easter Pilgrimage to Lourdes in April. Everyone will tell you that this is one of the tough tasks in our annual program. And, of course, it is different for every group. But this year, as the Trust emerges from the grip of the pandemic, we have seen a renewed energy and some exciting results that underline the enduring public support for The Irish Pilgrimage Trust.

When the Trust decided that 2023 was the time for us to resume our Easter pilgrimage activity and return to Lourdes, our special place in the south of France, everyone greeted the news with great excitement. A flurry of activity ensued as our regional organisations and groups began to shed the restrictions and get back to work. News from the regions filtered into the Trust office as more and more groups began to reassemble and start their planning for Easter 2023.



Our cycle roster for the Wexford fundraising event included members of the Wexford Wheelers and friends from our Cycle to Lourdes team.

Some groups reactivated their 'regular' fund raising events, held around the same time every year. For example, the regional or local Church gate collections. Others will host Coffee mornings, Tea Parties, Raffles, Quiz Nights, Cake Sales, Easter Egg raffles and Golf classics. The variety is mind boggling and the inventiveness is really impressive.

In any event, fundraising is one of the few activities that bring The Irish Pilgrimage Trust out into the public eye. This is an important opportunity for the public to meet our volunteers and hear first hand about the work of the Trust. Fundraising volunteers become

the public face of the Trust and they are out there in all weather conditions, smiling and representing our organisation and showing their commitment and love for our wonderful Trust.



Group 308 Fundraising Bikathon got plenty of attention and support from the local business community and shoppers

Of course, 2023 is the first time in almost 3 years that conditions have allowed us to fully engage in our activities. The impact of the Covid pandemic continues to be felt far and wide. In addition, we are now facing rising inflation and increases in the cost of living, transport, groceries and in every other aspect of our lives. The Trust has not been immune from the effects of inflation as we face increased costs for air travel and hotel accommodation in France. The cost of the Easter pilgrimage has increased and this also puts an increased burden on our Groups who are required to raise additional funds to cover the costs. Additionally, our volunteers have to pay increased fare prices.

<p>No. _____</p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>Contact Number _____</p>	<p>1st Prize 2 Nights B & B with one Evening Meal at Clayton Hotel, LIMERICK sponsored by CLAYTON</p> <p>2nd Prize € 200 Voucher (sponsored by The Lightbrouse, Carrisroe, Sligo)</p> <p>3rd Prize Food Hamper - Value - € 150</p> <p>4th Prize € 100</p> <p>5th Prize Bottle of Brandy</p>	<p>DRAW Fri. 3rd Mar 2023 € 5 per Ticket - Book of 5 for € 20</p> <p>2nd Prize € 200 Voucher (sponsored by The Lightbrouse, Carrisroe, Sligo)</p> <p>In aid of The Irish Pilgrimage Trust Holidays for young people with additional needs in Kilkuan and Lourdes</p> <p>Draw will take place on Friday night 3rd March 2023 in YEAT'S LOCAL, Rathcormac, Sligo.</p> <p><small>Permit No. 34/2022 issued by Garda Superintendent, Sligo Registered Charity Number 2000955. Revenue 042082</small></p>
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A Ticket for the 2023 Draw organised and run by Mary Clancy, Group 164, Sligo that generated great support and culminated in a wonderful social evening in Yeats Local, Rathcormack on Fri. 3rd March 2023. The event received widespread community and business support for the benefit of our Guests travelling to Lourdes at Easter and the summer Friendship Weeks in Kilkuan

FUNDRAISING -to Fund our Activities

Our organisation is unique in the fact that we rely totally on fundraising and the generosity of the public, our local communities and businesses who support our fundraising events. Without this support the Trust would not survive as we are not a state funded organisation.



Michael Galvin, Cork Group 126, collecting a very generous donation from Bishopstown & District Lions Club towards the cost of our Easter trip to Lourdes 2023

Now, more than ever, we are reliant on that support to provide us with the finance to offer fully paid pilgrimage holidays to the many deserving young people with additional needs. The volunteers of the Trust are the unsung heroes as they give their own time freely to support and care for our special young people, while also paying for their own fares.

The value of a donation to the Trust is incalculable because the young people who benefit from our services are given a once in a lifetime experience, filled with joy, memories that endure for years.

As mentioned at the beginning, fundraising is an ongoing annual cycle for The Irish Pilgrimage Trust. The funds we receive are used to the maximum benefit of the young people we serve. On their behalf we want to express our gratitude for the enduring support and contributions we receive from everyone.

Marie-Thérèse Connolly, An Appreciation

On 31st January 2023 we learned the sad news of the passing of Marie Thérèse Connolly, Carrick-on-Suir, Co. Waterford. Marie Thérèse was a stalwart volunteer in the South East Region of The Irish Pilgrimage Trust. She was known and highly respected throughout the region for her tireless dedication to Trust. For many years she was the Applications Coordinator, assembling forms from hopeful young people across the south east who wished to avail of our Easter Pilgrimage to Lourdes. She travelled as a volunteer carer with Group 129 from the early 1980s and was to the fore in the formation of Group 203 in



Marie Thérèse (front, centre) with Helen Kirwan (left) daughter Therese (right). Back row, L to R, Trust friends James Power, John Connolly, Catherine Breen, Stephanie Keating, Naomi Hennessy Browne and Sr Betty Cagney

1999. Latterly she travelled to Lourdes at Easter with the Trust's Forever Friends Group 358. Marie Thérèse also joined her friends Helen Kirwan and Mary Clancy for a wonderful and memorable summer trip to Lourdes with their Hosanna House Group.

Last November Marie Thérèse joined friends from Goup 203, 129, 94 and Hosanna House for a Marie-Thérèse's Birthday party and a celebration of her life in the Trust. The party was hosted by Stephanie Keating at her home in Carrick-on-Suir. The occasion was a truly joyous one as everyone enjoyed good food, good company and shared so many happy Trust memories with a cherished and dear friend. Marie Therese's deep faith, humility, generosity and kindness along with her love of Lourdes impressed everyone who know her. So many of us owe a great debt of gratitude to her for her gentle way in leading us to be better volunteers and to serve well. We aspired to her high standards in all our Trust activities with the central focus being the wellbeing and positive experience of the special young people we serve.

Marie Thérèse, who retired from teaching a number of years ago, was pre-deceased by her husband Maurice. We extend our deepest sympathy to her family, in-laws, grandchildren and friends.

Ruby anniversary of The Irish Pilgrimage Trust Cycle to Lourdes

The biennial Cycle to Lourdes has been a regular feature of Trust activities and the flagship fundraising event for the past 40 years. Funds raised by the Cycle have made a significant contribution towards the cost of the Easter Pilgrimage and Kilcuan. From humble beginnings in 1984 the Cycle to Lourdes has grown in importance, particularly during the past 20 years. Here, Cycle Founder Dr. Michael McGloin reflects on the impact of the recent pandemic on the Trust Cycle, and casts an eye to the future.

The first Irish Pilgrimage Trust Cycle to Lourdes left Eyre Square on Wednesday April 13th 1984. Next year will mark the 40th anniversary.

And guess what? Yes! The celebration of the ruby anniversary will be marked by a very special cycle to arrive in Lourdes on Good Friday, March 29th. 2024.



1984 - members of our first Cycle group pictured in France on their way to Lourdes

Like nearly every other regular activity, Covid interrupted the usual biennial sequence of the Lourdes cycle. To prevent withdrawal symptoms, HQ organised a very enjoyable and successful cycle around Ireland last summer. A sincere thank you to all who participated and who had any hand in supporting the event – it has certainly kept up the momentum.

The Trust has used the enforced break as an opportunity to examine all aspects of the cycle and how best to structure it in order to ensure the enjoyment

and safety of participants, and the sustainability and financial viability of the event. Terms of reference have been agreed and a new committee established to organise and run Cycle 2024.



Dr. Michael McGloin (second from left) with members of the group of Cyclists who joined in 1986

Already there is evidence of mounting interest and Cycle 2024 will be officially launched in a few weeks during the Irish Pilgrimage Trust annual pilgrimage to Lourdes at Easter. **The Committee have been at work planning a brand new and exciting route.** This is still a secret, but we can promise that it will be completely different and give participants another view of French countryside and life. Spaces are limited, but James at HQ will welcome expressions of interest and we will circulate full details following the official launch in April.

For more details, and to keep up to date, check the Irish Pilgrimage Trust website or follow us on Facebook.

Michael



Our new Cycle LOGO celebrating 40 years

OUR TRUST NURSE

The Irish Pilgrimage Trust is very fortunate to have so many nurses supporting the organisation and who travel with us as volunteers each year. Their commitment goes far beyond the actual Easter pilgrimage week in Lourdes.

Each group Nurse works closely with their group leader in preparation for the Lourdes trip at Easter. They are equally involved in our summer Friendship Weeks here in Ireland as well as the summer Hosanna House trips to Lourdes. Our Nurses are an integral part of each Trust group. A group cannot travel without their group nurse as their medical support for our special guests is essential.



Mary Dunnion Trust Nurse, (extreme left) and Teresa Lee, former Trust Nurse (extreme right) with a group of student Nurses in Lourdes

The group nurse involvement begins at an early stage in the process of preparation for our trips. They work alongside the group leader and the Trust office in the formation of the group. They are a key part of the process of reviewing guest applications and the selection of our guests.

Their commitment goes further, as the nurse accompanies their group leader on home visits, to get to meet each guest and their families, guardians and key workers. All of this work takes place on a voluntary basis in the weeks and months before our pilgrimage trips. Obviously, the medical support is a primary aspect of each group's preparation and the group nurses can also avail of the Trust Doctors input.

Additionally, our group nurses attend regional and national meetings where they can keep up to date with the developments in the overall planning of our trips.

Last September Eileen Doyle, group nurse with group 92 joined the Board of Trustees of The Irish Pilgrimage Trust. Eileen, who hails from Co. Wexford in the South East region, has been a Trust volunteer for a number of years and travelled on the Easter pilgrimage to Lourdes. Shortly after joining the Board, Eileen accepted the position of Trust Nurse, a very important

role that is central to all the care planning for our special guests as well as a leading role for all Trust nurses.

Eileen will take up the role in succession to Mary Dunnion after the 2023 Easter trip to Lourdes. In the meantime, Eileen will work alongside Mary as deputy Trust Nurse for the 2023 pilgrimage to Lourdes and will join her as part of the central Medical Support Team in Lourdes.

Following the Easter pilgrimage Eileen will formally become our TRUST NURSE. In doing so, she will become the fourth Trustee to assume the role of Trust Nurse. She follows in the footsteps of fellow Wexford woman, Mary Wade who was the first Trustee appointed to the role. Mary remains active in the Jet Set group from the South East and is also deeply involved in Friendship Weeks and Cois Cuain.

Mary was followed by Teresa Lee who was the second Trustee to hold the post. Following her 10 years of service as Trust Nurse, Teresa continues to provide her support and will be present on the Medical Team in Lourdes during our upcoming Easter pilgrimage.

Our present Trust Nurse, Mary Dunnion (Group 173) succeeded Teresa and has served the organisation for the past 11 years, including the difficult years of the pandemic. Mary will pass on the baton to Eileen Doyle following the 2023 Easter pilgrimage.



Eileen Doyle, incoming Trust Nurse (centre) with Group 92 friends

As mentioned earlier, the commitment of our Trust Nurses and Group Nurses is the cornerstone of the Trust. Their commitment and sterling service is often unseen as they blend seamlessly into their groups. They bring with them the highest standards of care and compassion. They work tirelessly in the support and care of our special guests and helping our volunteers carers in their roles.

National Ploughing Championships 2022



The National Ploughing Championships takes place each September and is a showcase event for all things farming and so much more. Drawing enormous crowds of all ages from every walk of life, it is the “go-to” event at the end of summer. Every imaginable business and service provider is represented there in some shape or other. It provides the biggest shop window on which to promote an organisation or business. In 2022, The Irish Pilgrimage Trust was gifted an opportunity to be there. Our Editor James McHugh reports.

In late summer 2022 the Trust was given a wonderful opportunity to promote The Irish Pilgrimage Trust and to raise some funds at the National Ploughing Championships, taking place in Rathiniska, in County Laois in late September. The generous offer came from **ANGUS BEEF IRELAND**, who invited the Trust to participate on their Stand and that all the required support would be provided. While the preparation and lead in time was quite short, members from the South East Region and staff from the Trust office in

Kilcuan accepted the kind offer to participate and set about making plans to “man” the Stand.



R to L - Ber, Zoe and James arriving at sunrise to begin their day on the Angus Beef Ireland stand at the National Ploughing Championships

The four day National Ploughing Championships is Europe’s largest outdoor event and attracting almost 300,000 visitors to view the ploughing and visit the 1,700 exhibition stands. The European and World Ploughing Championships form the backdrop to this huge town and country social gathering. Exhibits cater for everything from farm machinery, finance, and all things farming to cooking demonstrations, every imaginable commercial enterprise, music and a multitude of other entertaining attractions.



L - R John Sullivan, ANGUS BEEF IRELAND, Noel Faughnan, with Zoe O’Dea, Bernadette Connolly and Patricia Byrne from the Irish Pilgrimage Trust on the Angus Beef Ireland Stand Championships

The Trust’s presence in the middle of all this excitement was an excellent opportunity to meet and interact with the public and tell them all about our organization, activities and our amazing volunteers and guests. An added bonus of being present at the Ploughing was the chance meeting of so many Trust volunteers and past guests.

The day is long and tough, with Exhibition Stands

National Ploughing Championships 2022

open from 08:00 in the morning and working right through to 18:00 each evening. The Trust members played a very active role on the Angus Beef Ireland stand, meeting and greeting the public, selling tickets for their special draw and promoting the Trust. We arranged our rota so that everyone involved had the opportunity to take a rest, stroll around and visit lots of stands and exhibits. The proceeds of the draw were donated to The Irish Pilgrimage Trust.



At the end of a very successful Show Angus Beef Ireland were full of praise for the Trust personnel who joined them on thier Stand. They were especially grateful

L to R James McHugh, Bernadette Connolly, Brendan Digney and Brian Delaney from The Irish Pilgrimage Trust on the Angus Beef Ireland stand at the Ploughing

for the commitment of the wonderful volunteers who turned out each day. A generous donation was made to the Trust that will help finance the Easter 2023 trip to Lourdes.



Above - Trust Volunteers busy filling entries and organising tick sales on the Angus Beef Ireland Stand

Following the event, the Trust remained in close communication with Angus Beef Ireland and formally thanked them for their generosity in giving The Irish Pilgrimage Trust this exceptional opportunity and for the donation of much needed funds. Thanks was also extended to other exhibitors on the stand including Dawn Meats, Liffy Meats, Foyle Food Group, and Ashbourne Meats who made the Trust feel so welcome each day and who donated generously to the Trust.



Angus Beef Ireland Staff along with fellow Exhibitors from their stand in attendance as a cheque for € 5,000 was presented to members of The Irish Pilgrimage Trust from Angus Beef Ireland at the National Ploughing Championships

YOUR LASTING GIFT



Please remember us in your Will

You may have supported our work in the past by contributing to our fundraising to bring young people with additional needs to Lourdes at Eastertime or to Kilcuan for a summer break with our Friendship Weeks. Or you may have volunteered and travelled with us to Lourdes and experienced at first hand the joy and happiness of the young people who join us as our guests for that wonderful week. Or you may have simply heard about The Irish Pilgrimage Trust for the very first time recently. Please be assured that your involvement is always remembered and appreciated.

One way to ensure your enduring support is to leave a gift in your Will. A gift means that The Irish Pilgrimage Trust can continue to serve future generations of special young people and give them the experience of that unique trip to Lourdes or to one of our holiday homes in Ireland.



The value of your gift is immeasurable for many reasons, for example,

- Maximum benefit is gained from donations and fundraising as our Volunteers pay their fares.
- Our Nurses and Doctors are Volunteers who also pay their own fares.
- Our Volunteers fundraise every year to raise the money to pay fully for the costs of the young people.
- Our organisation is run by a Board of Trustees who are volunteers and do not receive expenses.
- The precious memories of our guests are treasured for a lifetime and invaluable.

If you wish to leave a gift to The Irish Pilgrimage Trust, please contact your Solicitor to make the arrangements.