



# Irish Trust Talk



The Irish Pilgrimage Trust, Kilcuan, Clarinbridge, Galway  
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Charity Registration Number 20009953 CHY (Revenue) No. 5992

Issue 101

Autumn 2019

# 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 now also provide special summer holidays for people with special needs at our purpose built holiday homes - Cois Cuain in Kilrane, Wexford and Kilcuan in Clarinbridge, Galway.

Check out our website on [www.irishpilgrimagetrust.com](http://www.irishpilgrimagetrust.com) for more details and forms  
The Trust is a Registered Charity - C.R.N. 20009953; Chy. No. 5992



**PLEASE  
DONATE**

## The Irish Pilgrimage Trust is NOT State Funded!

We rely on the generosity of our donors and the fundraising by our Volunteers to finance the work and activities of the Trust

To DONATE

Go online to [www.irishpilgrimagetrust.com](http://www.irishpilgrimagetrust.com) or  
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## The Irish Pilgrimage Trust Safeguarding



Designated Liaison  
Person

**Bernadette  
Connolly**



Deputy Designated  
Liaison Person  
**Catherine Foley**

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

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2019 Smiling Faces

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# A Word from the Chair

Helen Kirwan



Dear friends,

Welcome to our Autumn edition of the Irish Trust Talk!

Schools are open, students and teachers begin a new year and we in the Irish Pilgrimage Trust are embarking on our new year. The Trust family has been very busy since our last Trust Talk! Over 1,000 people in 46 groups travelled to Lourdes at Easter. We travelled in 6 Jet Set groups (adults from 18 to 30), 4 family groups, one Forever Friends group and 35 other groups bringing young people under 18. We were again privileged to have Bishop Donal McKeown with us to lead our celebrations full of colour, joy, care and friendship. On my return from Lourdes at Easter my overwhelming feeling was one of gratitude, gratitude for the gift of travelling with so many special people, our guests and also our carers. I was truly inspired by the presence of so many young volunteers and by the care, compassion and willingness to help that was so obvious everywhere I went in Lourdes.

As a Trust we have been busy since Easter also. 15 people walked the Camino de Santiago to raise funds for the Trust. A big thank you to them! Hundreds of others have also begun their fundraising efforts for the 2020 pilgrimage and we say well done and keep up the good work. The summer saw three groups travel with adults with additional needs to Hosanna House. If you follow the Trust Facebook page you will have seen lots of photos of these fun filled weeks. Facebook is a great way to keep in touch with the Trust throughout the year. Do log in from time to time

to get a flavour of what is happening in the Trust. Six remarkable youth groups travelled to Hosanna House assisting the three Irish groups who travelled but also helping a number of HCPT groups. These wonderful young people enhance the experience of Lourdes in so many ways. We hope to see many of them back in the future. Kilcuan and Cois Cuain hosted 6 friendship weeks in total providing a wonderful holiday for those with additional needs and much needed respite for their families.

One busy year complete and another just starting. Group leaders are already working hard on getting volunteer carers, nurses and chaplains for 2020. If you are reading this and have not travelled with us for some years do consider joining us again! If you know someone who has never travelled sow the seed and ask them to join your group or simply ask them to go online and fill in the volunteer form and we will find them a group. We are very excited this year that some of our forms will be available to fill in online and we hope that this will make life easier for many people.

Guest application closing date is October 31st so now is the time to get out there and talk to families of guests who would be eligible to travel and encourage them to apply for this life changing trip. Remember guests travel free of charge thanks to the huge fundraising efforts of so many people. Speaking of fundraising our biggest fundraiser remains our bi-annual cycle to Lourdes which takes place in 2020. Preparations for this event are well underway and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the organisers for the trojan work they do to make this event possible. Of course a cycle cannot take place without cyclists and I wish all those training for the cycle the very best. Not only are they spending hours on their bikes training for the

event they are also out there fundraising. Each cyclist must raise €3,000 in order to participate. I would ask you to support them in every way you can if you see them out cycling or collecting.

As we look forward to 2020 we are also looking back on almost 50 years and I would ask you to please send in photos or articles for the Trust history. Thanks to those who have already contributed to the history financially and in other ways.



Many of you will be aware that Maureen O'Loan retired last March. Maureen did trojan work for the Trust in her Administrator's role dealing with Guest applications. Her dedication and thoroughness ensured that everything was always in order. On behalf of everyone throughout the Trust family I want to extend every good wish to Maureen and her family for a very happy retirement.

Finally, I look forward to meeting many of you during the year at meetings, in Lourdes, in Hosanna House or on Friendship Week. I wish all our group leaders and regional officers the very best for the 2020 pilgrimage year. May the joy and friendship of the Trust family sustain you and may Our Lady of Lourdes bestow many blessings on you and your families.

Helen

# Trust News & Events around the Regions



## Southern Region - Cycle 2020 Fundraising Spinathon, Killarney, Co. Kerry.

Brendan and Conor Coffey held a Spinathon event in Killarney recently to raise funds for the Trust and their 2020 Cycle to Lourdes. The lads were joined by Brendan's uncle John Coffey (centre) who was celebrating his 100th Birthday. John's daughter, grandson and great grand child also gave their support and ensured that this was a very memorable and unique occasion.

## North West Region



The North West Vintage and Heritage Club held a Charity Run based at Rathcormac School in Sligo on the 16th June last to raise funds for The Irish Pilgrimage Trust. The Club was formed in 2009 and has 215 members. The members lovingly restore and maintain vintage and heritage cars and vehicles and meet regularly. Each year they hold events like the Charity Run to raise funds for charity. The June event ran from Rathcormac to The Beach Bar, Aughris, Sligo with all proceeds from ticket sales and raffles going to the Trust. To date the Club has donated €112,000.00 to local charities. On Monday evening 2nd Sep The Club very kindly presented Mary Clancy with a cheque for €4,710.00 for the Trust.



## Midlands Region

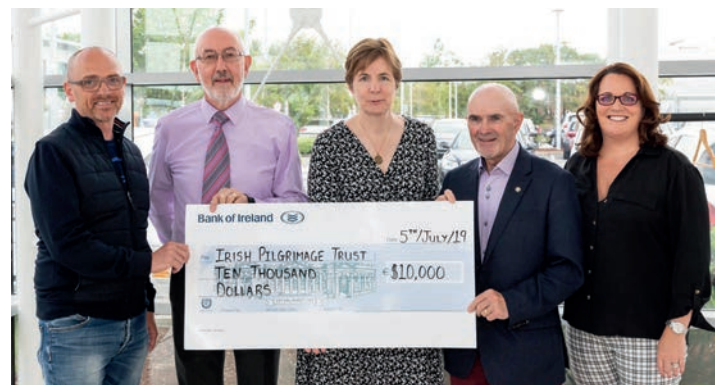
Seen here at the cheque presentation of the 27th annual Golf classic in aid of the North Tipperary/Midlands branch of The Irish Pilgrimage Trust which was held recently in Nenagh Golf Club are Club Captain Hugh Maher, Vinny Savage from the Trust, Alice Varley Club Treasurer and Mary O'Shea Lady Captain. A total of €8,000.00 was raised at this event. The Trust would like to thank everyone that took part in any way to make this event such a wonderful success.



## West Region

### TE Connectivity Donation

Galway / International company Creganna Medical / TE Connectivity included the Trust in it's 2019 Local Community Charity Ambassador Programme. The programme supports local charitable efforts where its employees live and work. The company's corporate funding allocation of \$40,000 under this scheme was shared between 4 x local charities with each charity receiving \$10,000 each. The Irish Pilgrimage Trust was awarded funding to assist in the cost of refurbishment and upgrading of 3 x En-Suite bathrooms in Kilcuan, our holiday home in Clarinbridge that caters for people with special needs. Members of the Trust are pictured below receiving the cheque for \$10,000 made to the Trust at a presentation ceremony held in the company's Galway HQ on 5th July.



Paraic Curtis, SVP and General Manager TE Medical presenting the cheque for \$10,000 to James McHugh, Zoe O'Dea and Pat Jorden from The Irish Pilgrimage Trust and Deirdre Mannion, TE Connectivity

# Trust News & Events from around the Regions

## South East Region



Sister Betty (centre) with Bridget Fitzpatrick (L) and Stephanie Keating (R)

Congratulations to Sister Betty Cagney, Group 203 and a Trust Cyclist who recently celebrated her Golden Jubilee at a very special gathering in the Newpark Hotel in Kilkenny. Betty was surrounded by family, fellow sisters of the Presentation order and friends. Following celebration of Mass in thanksgiving Betty made a wonderful speech recounting her early life growing up on the family farm before going off to join the Presentation order. Betty referred to the occasion as a gathering of her 3 families, her siblings, relatives, neices and nephews, her fellow Presentation Sisters, and her Irish Pilgrimage Trust Family. After a beautiful meal and presentation of the Jubilee Cake everybody joined in an impromptu party. Of course the party began with the obligatory singing of Rise and Shine followed by more singing, dancing and story telling. The talent on show ranged from the very young children to the more seasoned entertainers and this ensured a great tribute to our much loved Betty.



Some of Betty's Trust Family, from L to R - Paddy Boyle, Sharon Donohue, Margaret Power, John O'Reilly, Stephanie Keating, Sr, Betty Cagney, Bridget Fitzpatrick, Michael Cleary, Gerry Martin, Liam Ahern, James McHugh and Fr. Richard Scrivan

Congratulations to Fr. Tom Dalton Group 94 in the South East who celebrated the Silver Jubilee of his ordination to the priesthood on 5th June 2019. Fr. Tom has travelled with the Trust every year since and has been Chaplain and also joint Group Leader of his beloved Group 94.



## Maureen O'Loan



Earlier this year, Maureen O'Loan, one of the The Irish Pilgrimage Trust's Administrators, retired. For the past 18 years Maureen worked tirelessly on behalf of each and every guest who travelled on our Easter pilgrimage to Lourdes or on Friendship Week in Kilcuan or Cois Cuain or the summer pilgrimage to Hosanna House in Lourdes.

The Irish Pilgrimage Trust has indeed been blessed to have had the benefit of Maureen's selfless dedication and not to mention her forensic skills in navigating the details of forms and paperwork. Her legendary knowledge and energy to resolve difficult or complex issues that might deny a guest the opportunity to travel to Lourdes has always been appreciated and marvelled at by those who served with her. Maureen did not acquire the title **Inspector O'Loan** without very good reason. Her reward has always been her quiet smile when she recognised a guest arriving into the Trust Mass in Lourdes, on Tuesday morning. A Guest who might otherwise have missed out on the trip but for her skilful expertise in finding the resolution to that last minute hitch. While Maureen performed her duties with diligence she also possesses a devilish sense of humour and could not resist the opportunity to prank someone. Maureen leaves a legacy of service and honour that is appreciated by volunteers, regional officers, group leaders and Trustees alike, not to mention the staff who have had the pleasure of serving with her. Maureen's example made us all want to be our best always. We wish her a wonderful retirement in the company of her beloved family. Thank you Inspector.

## South East Region

Eamon Kelly gratefully receiving a cheque of €3,500 from Enniscorthy Credit Union for The Irish Pilgrimage Trust, Group 561, for HH Lourdes, Summer 2019



## North West Region

Fr. Michael McGrath, Group Leader 108 and former Trust Chaplain recently celebrated his Silver Jubilee with Mass in Longford Cathedral. Fr. Michael was joined by family and friends and members of the Trust for this special occasion.



## South Region

Group 126 attended the ordination of the new Bishop of Cork and Ross, Bishop Fintan Galvin recently. The new bishop joined the Group after the ceremony when Michael Galvin and the gang formally welcomed Bishop Fintan to Cork!

## Reflections - LOURDES 2019

### Reflections on a Week.

*Submitted by Frank Burton, Group 70*

How lucky are we?

We spend a week in the company of real friends and kindred spirits.

We hear the laughter of those in our care.

We see the smiles of the faces around us.

We share special moments with our guests and we experience them achieve.

We feel the peace, warmth and serenity that encapsulate us.

We step off the world and are free to be, and to give, the very best of ourselves.

We witness ten strangers become ten friends.

We experience the spiritual presence.

They grow – We grow.

We return stronger and better - mentally and emotionally.

We return again the following year.

How lucky we are!



**Its not always sunshine  
- but we always smile!!**

### Special Needs Poem – April Vernon

They say that I have “special” needs,  
And while that’s partly true,  
The needs that matter most to me  
Are the same ones you have too.  
I NEED TO BE ACCEPTED.  
I need friends that make me smile.  
I need a chance to learn and grow,  
Feeling valued all the while.  
Sure, I need some extra help,  
And some things I can’t do.  
But I hope you’ll see beyond all that -  
Inside, I’m just like you.

## On Yer Bike!

In recent years, cycling has become increasingly popular. We have come a long way in a few years – high nellys and trouser clips have been replaced by carbon fibre frames, and lycra. But the engine remains the same – the cyclist still has to pump the pedals and lose the sweat.

The Irish Pilgrimage Trust were well ahead of the fashion and we organised our first cycle to Lourdes in 1984. Like other aspects of cycling, things have changed. 36 years ago, the cyclists cycled to Rosslare and took the ferry. They camped on the route and relied on maps to find their way. Now, we fly to France, stay in hotels and have GPS. However, the cyclist still has to pump the pedals and lose the sweat. As the French say, “*plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*” (“the more things change, the more they stay the same”).

We are currently recruiting for our next cycle at Easter, 2020. This will be our 19<sup>th</sup> sponsored cycle. Participants (or if they prefer, “pilgrims”) will leave from Shannon for Dinard, in the North

of France, early on Saturday, April 4<sup>th</sup> 2020. Over the following week they will cycle 1000 km, arriving in Lourdes on Good Friday evening, April 10<sup>th</sup>. Plans for the route, accommodation and meals are well advanced. We are limited in the



2020 Cyclists Killian McGann and Martin Forde enjoy the Tea Break at Shannonbridge supervised by Val Forde from the Back-up Team

number of people we can include, and already over half the places have been filled. Many participants have “done the cycle” multiple times.



So, would YOU be interested? There is still time to train. We have had cyclists from 18 to 80 years. This could be your opportunity to see the “real France”, tasting the local delicacies and wines on your route. Or this could be a real pilgrimage to the shrine of Our Lady (but pilgrims need to eat and drink too!). We would love to have you join us – contact HQ at 091 79 66 22 or email to:

[jmchugh@irishpilgrimagetrust.com](mailto:jmchugh@irishpilgrimagetrust.com)



## Easter 2019 LOURDES Pilgrimage Memories

*Some Thoughts from T.Y. Student Alannah on her 2019 Easter Pilgrimage to Lourdes*

During transition year at my secondary school, I got the opportunity to travel to Lourdes during Easter of 2019 with the Irish Pilgrimage Trust as a Student Youth Carer. My main role was to be a helper to the carers during the trip.



I was both nervous and excited about the trip, it would be the first time I was taking a trip abroad without my parents. I wondered would I get on OK with everyone. Before the trip I met with the Leaders of my group, Ciara and Katie, who were both Nurses. They were really nice and I wasn't as nervous about the trip after I had met them. On the 21st of April, 2019, I went to Lourdes with my Group 309.

was definitely no time to get bored, with excursions to the mountains, shopping, daily mass, which was full of song and dance. I lit candles for my family and friends, made many new friends and



had loads of fun. I had the best time and I made so many happy memories. I hope to get the opportunity to go back next year again as a youth carer. When it was time to go home, I didn't want to leave, but I was glad that every one that went had a good week.

Alannah



Some members of my Group 309

The week was full of activities, there

**Thank you Wexford and South East LIONS Clubs!**

The South East Lions Clubs recently collaborated on a project resulting in the presentation of €6,750 to The Irish Pilgrimage Trust for the purchase of a steel shed in which to store equipment at their 'Cois Cuain' special holiday home near Rosslare, County Wexford. The South East clubs donation was matched with a payment from the 'An Post' fund.

'Cois Cuain' opened in summer 2010, is fully accessible for wheelchair users and can accommodate 17 people. It is rented on a self-catering basis to groups, families and organisations who have people with special needs as many of these groups find it difficult to find premises suitable for their needs.

These holidays support young people and adults who would not be able to avail of holidays without the assistance of others. Their needs are met by a team of volunteer carers. Trips to the beach, picnics, bowling and other entertainment are all packed into the week, creating a wonderful opportunity for the guests to experience a holiday independent of their parents and families. These holidays also provide much needed respite for the parents and families.



Pictured above from L to R :

Johnny Furlong (Wexford), Mary Wade (IPT), Seamus Flood (Wexford), Helen Kirwan, James White (IPT), DG Frank O'Donoghue, PDG John O'Donovan (Carlow), President Gabrielle Willis (Wexford), District Treasurer Ger Cashman, Pat Murphy (Carrick on Suir), Willie Roche (Wexford).

Helen Kirwan, National Chair of The Irish Pilgrimage Trust said 'Cois Cuain' is a very valuable part of the Trust and we are very grateful to the Lions Clubs in supporting us. A huge thank you to all in the Lions Clubs for providing us with funding for our new shed where we will securely store

**A LEGACY FOR THE FUTURE**

**Please consider leaving a gift in your will to help ensure that the life changing work of The Irish Pilgrimage Trust can continue for many years to come.**

Find out more by contacting Bernadette Connolly on 091 796622 or email [bconnolly@irishpilgrimagetrust.com](mailto:bconnolly@irishpilgrimagetrust.com)

**YES! I wish to support the work of The Irish Pilgrimage Trust**

I would like to make monthly contributions of €21  or my choice of  €

Please debit my account on the 10th day of each month

**If you are a PAYE Taxpayer your annual donation of €250 can be enhanced by allowing The Irish Pilgrimage Trust to claim a tax refund (example:- €250 + Tax Refund €112.5 = €362.5 total value of donation)**

NOTE: Single European Payments Area (SEPA) requirements mean that BIC and IBAN codes are mandatory fields when setting up direct debit retail electronic payments. Your BIC and IBAN numbers can be found on your bank statement or by contacting your bank.

The Irish Pilgrimage Trust unique mandate reference (completed by the TRUST)

By signing this mandate form you authorise The Irish Pilgrimage Trust to send instructions to your bank to debit your account in accordance with the instructions from The Irish Pilgrimage Trust. You have the right to a refund under the terms and conditions of your agreement with your bank. A refund must be claimed within 8 weeks of starting from the date on which your account was debited. The Irish Pilgrimage Trust will send confirmation of your direct debit information no less than 7 days before your first direct debit is due to commence.

**You are required to complete all fields marked \***

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\*Address

\*IBAN  Postcode

\*BIC

\*Signature  \*Date

Please return the completed form to The Irish Pilgrimage Trust, Kilcuan, Clarinbridge, Galway H91 W596  
 You can also make a donation online at [www.irishpilgrimagetrust.com](http://www.irishpilgrimagetrust.com)

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