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Soul care Retreat

One of the things that the staff care and development team do is to organise soul care retreats for our missionaries. This is a chance for missionaries to come away from their field and ministry and have time apart in God's presence and in company with others to rest, reflect, worship and to have time to look to their own spiritual health. We can become so busy serving and doing that we have very little time to just be in God's presence. We can neglect our relationship with God, and the health of our own souls. Peter Scazzero refers to this as "using God to run from God" We read in the gospels that Jesus would often go off by himself to a lonely place to pray to His Father. And so we offer the invitation that Jesus gave to his disciples, "come away by yourselves to a secluded place and rest a while."

Our most recent soul care retreat was held amidst the stunning beauty of Ireland's north coast. Times of group reflection and worship were intermixed with time on our own with God, and walks in the splendour of God's creation. And of course, because we are Communitas, laughter. We gathered from Italy, Spain, Scotland, Ireland, France, Germany, the Czech Republic, and New Hampshire. It was a privilege to both serve and take part, to be refreshed and also to be able to help with leading devotions, praying with and for others, and talking about life and ministry, and just being able to help with practicalities like driving.

If you have never taken time apart for a spiritual retreat, or have not done so for a long time, I invite you to set aside a time and either attend a retreat or simply go off by yourself for a day or a weekend or even just a morning if it's all you

God's presence, and so can everyone else around me.



Holy Conversations

Phil's role as hospice chaplain brings so many opportunities to talk to people to comfort, pray with, and share God's love. In any week, Phil will be talking with the ill, the dying, their families and friends, and those who have just lost a loved one. Grief opens the heart to thoughts and feeling that at other times we find ways to insulate ourselves from. So many have questions at this time of life and this opens opportunities to share the good news of God's love and forgiveness. Pray for Phil for grace and wisdom in these holy conversations.

Do you talk to strangers? In the last few weeks I (Martha) have had several wonderful "chance" conversations with strangers. Topics ranged from books, grandchildren, overpriced hospital cafe food, to social welfare and government spending. One took place in a bus, one walking up my street, and one sharing a table in a cafe. But before each of these brief conversations finished I had been told about something deeply troubling to each person. It reminds me that we are told to be always ready to give an answer for the hope that is in us. And DO talk to strangers!

Then there are the "everyday" conversations, with family, friends, neighbours and workmates. A neighbour who's mom has just died. A work colleague who is worried about a family member. All of these are holy conversations when we invite the Holy Spirit to be part of them. Every conversation offers the chance build up, to encourage, to challenge or correct as the need arises, to bring comfort, to bring God into our everyday conversations instead of leaving Him on the margins. May we all learn to speak the gospel more freely and fluently.

Thank you for standing with us. We are so grateful for your prayers and support.



For teammates to join us in Celbridge.
For our role as Staff Care and Development coordinators for Communitas in Western Europe.
For our children in school, work, and social lives-these are challenging times to be young.
For Phil as he ministers to people in the hospice.

May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word. 2 Thessalonians 2:16,17



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