

Presentation by David Robinson

Personal Reflection

- What is Mary Aikenhead Ministries
- PJP of pontifical rite (cf. Diocesan)
 - Established by Holy See on petition from Sisters of Charity (SOC)
 - member – Congregational Leader SOC
 - lay ecclesial partnership
- Objects of - future orientated
- further the ministries
 - build on charism + traditions SOC
 - collaborate other church entities
 - formation of leaders – multi lingual language of mission + corporate

Transfer by SOC 1 July 2009

Trustees – sponsors – canonical responsibility in same way as Religious Institutes – report Rome Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life CICALSAL

Main Role – protect + enhance what is entrusted to us especially the charism shared with us; reenergise (reinvent?) the deep story. Legacy from SOC 18,000 employees health + education; experience of church for over 3000 young women; 1 million p.a. presentations of patients to health facilities i.e. 1m opportunities for our patients to experience the healing ministry of Christ.

You may ask: who are Trustees – 1 out of 6 is a religious, most of them extraordinary, already leaders in Church, trusted advisers to Archdiocese, eminent medical practitioner & educator.

Short Straw to-day – Directors Skill Matrix

I am Ordinary – what could be more ordinary: married accountant, 4 child, 2 + grandchild + MORTGAGE

Great thing is: why always hope in & for the Church – a lot of Ordinary People like me who you have shared your charism – many extraordinary people as well – if there were opportunities given to them

They will feel as I feel – privileged, inspired, deepened spirituality – so many gifts.

My Story

Traditional Catholic family, middle of 7.

Educated SOC + CBs, Altar Boy – LCM Lewisham Hospital etc

Engagement between family & Church. Older brothers entered religious life. Much contact with religious and therefore with inspiring role models – wonderful relationships, opportunities to show responsibility & leadership. Great stories about Br MQ Brady & the school car etc.

Leadership opportunities + inspiration also came from lay people – only 1 brother taught me in Yr 11 + Yr 12.

Did I have a call to religious life? A lot of noise, 4 best friends + others joined – for me, place was at Home & not driven to do anything particularly.

Did accounting/economics part time – pretty ordinary + uninspiring when you consider what some of young people do these days.

At this point I married my life partner who in her way shares SOC, CB, Presentations Sisters life story and mine.

Charism is a deep story, becomes imbedded & as I am coming to realise imbedded without knowing it & also that you not alone. It is not just your story or one story. Real Mystery is here.

Unconsciously saying – Lord I am here, I don't know what the plan is but I'm here to serve – let me be "Extensively Useful"

My accounting practice not quite so normal DAY JOB. Bob up in different sorts of places. Director (Non Exec) of large listed construction group, auditor of one of the most radical Trade Unions, variety of business clients, but also some other 80 or 90 yr olds who I do a tax return & have a cup of tea with – ECLECTIC PRACTICE of above 18 people.

Just as important has been my relationships with Church where my accounting skills have introduced me to opportunities to be more a part of Church.

Accounting skills have got me in the door – but its been far more than my accounting skills needed or required or used.

This is where the Charism of SOC has kicked in (also the CB's). SOC story has been very much around the relationship with lay people – Caritas Christi – love of Christ impels us – particular of service of the poor.

Sr DELACEY and Mr PLUNKETT St Vincent's Hospital

But also that pioneering spirit of sisters of MA – who sent 5 out of 24 Irish Congregation. I feel that for the last 23 years at least I have been invited to participate at the pointy end of that pioneering spirit as one of the first as a director of a Corporate College, assisted appointment first lay principal of one of the Congregation Colleges, as a member of faceless group – Advisory Finance Committee oversaw many initiatives and since 2008 a Trustee of Mary Aikenhead Ministries.

Part of the SOC Charism - TRUST IN DIVINE PROVIDENCE

Add the other part of my story CB's

Insights

- I am not a Volunteer – connotation – "only" a volunteer – don't meet a commitment or do something I say I'm going to do its ok – this is a way of life
- this is part of my relationships, my service to our God.
If I don't make the grade here, there are other areas of service I can give.
- Not about giving something back, I feel there is no debt, – don't denigrate anybody who wants to give back - may be there's a bit of prodigal son in that

- Privilege of being alongside many special lay people who are also ordinary people, life long friendships created; many lay people not catholic – consistent with the Charism of SOC – mission is shared.

Challenges – no bed of roses

- a lot of business things – doing – not enough dreaming time (meetings take 2 days a month) OUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE is to ensure the charism we inherit is growing, re energised and vibrant well after current Trustees have gone.
- Relationships
- Started with a blank page – no course on how to be a Trustee, no office left to us to set our agenda – practical, logistic issues
- Reassuring bishops that although we are formed differently from religious we are still formed as Christian & Catholics & continue to be so and we can be trusted to take leadership roles.
- Practical one – so many hours in the day – I could spend whole time of MAM – I have many other responsibilities & relationships to nurture. Personally important that not just retired & semi-retired lay people take on these roles – need energy from different backgrounds view points.
- Also in terms of partners – everything is “shared” with my wife - not in terms of detailed info – but the highs & lows. She shares my feelings.
- Miscommunication & Misconceptions we – all have the same goal but the ideal roadmaps may be seen differently – we are also human – frailties & vulnerabilities come to the fore.
- “Nose in Hands off” – when and under what circumstances do Trustees need to get involved?
- Being seen as an alternative for other Religious Institutes to entrust their ministries & their charism with us.

Would you entrust your ministries, your charism to this person? I can only suggest there are other ordinary people like me if you invite, if you form and if you trust, would take the opportunity to join you and your congregation in your journey as part of the Church.