



ICPO NEWS

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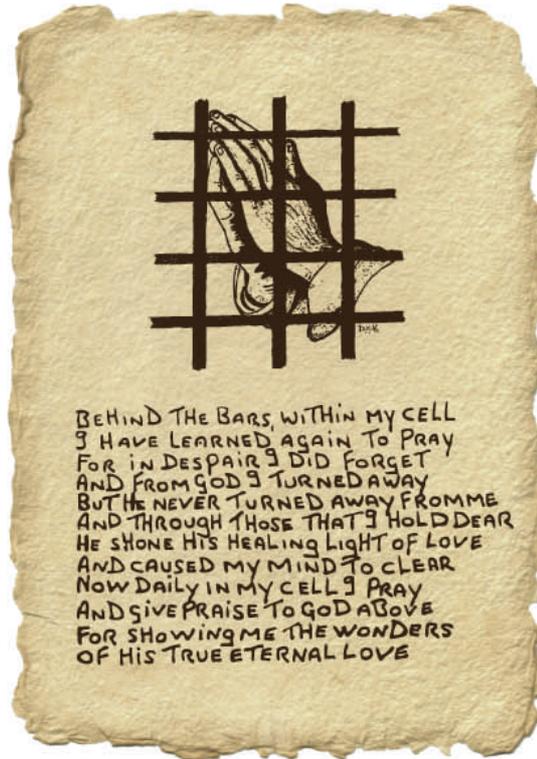
Summer 2011

ICPO celebrates 25 years

ICPO marked its 25th year in operation by holding a conference entitled Bridging the Distance in Dublin last November. A concert was also held in London in December.



President Mary McAleese, a founding member of the ICPO, opened the conference and is seen here delivering her address, which can be found on page six.



Poem and drawing by Richard McIlkenny, a member of the Birmingham Six.



President Mary McAleese greeting some of the founding members of ICPO - Bobby Gilmore, Nuala Kelly and Anastasia Crickley.



Bishop Séamus Hegarty presenting a commemorative gift of a poem and drawing by Richard McIlkenny, to President Mary McAleese.



Gerry Conlon, one of the Guilford Four and a former client, presents the ICPO Achievement Award to Gareth Peirce, a leading human rights lawyer at the ICPO's Concert in London

The ICPO

It is estimated that at any one time, there are up to 1000 Irish people in prison overseas. The ICPO has contact with Irish people in prisons in more than twenty countries, the majority of whom are in the UK followed by the US, Australia and a range of countries in Europe, South and Central America and the Far East.

The Irish Council for Prisoners Overseas (ICPO) was established by the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference in 1985, in response to serious concerns regarding the number of Irish men and women in UK prisons. These deeply held concerns related to their trials and subsequent imprisonments.

In recent years the ICPO has been able to offer a more comprehensive service to prisoners and to expand our existing services to prisoners' families. Currently the ICPO works for all Irish prisoners wherever they are: it makes no distinction in terms of religious faith, the nature of the prison conviction, or of a prisoner's status.

The objectives of the ICPO are to:

- Identify and respond to the needs of Irish prisoners abroad, and their families
- Research and provide relevant information to prisoners on issues such as deportation, repatriation and transfer
- Focus public attention on issues affecting Irish prisoners (ill-treatment, racist abuse, etc)
- Engage in practical work in aid of justice and human rights for Irish migrants, refugees and prisoners at an international level

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AN ROINN GNÓTHAÍ EACHTRACHA
Department of Foreign Affairs

A note from the editor...

In this issue we devoted a number of pages to the commemorative events held in November and December 2010, marking ICPO's twenty-fifth year in operation. President Mary McAleese addressed the conference in Dublin and we have reproduced her remarks in full, in this newsletter. In spite of freezing weather conditions, the ICPO concert in London was a wonderful success with an obvious highlight being the presentation of an award to human rights solicitor, Gareth Peirce, from Gerry Conlon of the Guilford Four.

The Irish Penal Reform Trust kindly submitted an article examining the conditions in Irish prisons. In view of the number of prisoners who consider applying for a transfer to an Irish prison, we thought it was useful to provide some information on the situation at home. The report outlines some serious concerns regarding prison conditions in this country and the less favourable remission rate in comparison to HMP Service. It is also important to balance these difficulties with the benefits of being close to family and friends. ICPO will continue to address the many queries you have regarding the transfer process and if you do have questions, please feel free to write to either ICPO office.

As this is such a busy time of year for sport, we have included another bumper edition of Eoin O'Mahony's 'Sports Update'. We are most grateful to him for all the work he does in preparing it. Similarly, our thanks go to Mícheál O'Cearbhail for his ever popular and much appreciated 'Smídín Gaeilge'. A number of clients have informed us recently that they have begun learning the Irish language whilst in prison. ICPO volunteer, Sr Mary also wrote a thought-provoking article called the 'Power of Positive Thinking'.

Ireland has been on the centre stage in the international media in recent months. While there had been considerable attention paid to the financial crisis we have been experiencing, in May, we were visited by Queen Elizabeth II, in what was an historic trip to Ireland and then by the President of the United States, Barack Obama. We have included a small article on their time in Ireland and my thanks to ICPO volunteers, Eileen and Sr Mary, for putting it together.

Thanks to all of you who contributed to our Postbag and Poetry pages. Please remember to let us know how you would like your letter, article or poem signed. Similarly, my thanks to Peter for his excellent book review - please keep them coming in! As always we welcome your thoughts or suggestions for the newsletter and indeed more generally on the services ICPO provide to prisoners and families alike.

For the last two and a half years I've had the privilege of editing this newsletter as part of my role as ICPO Coordinator. This is the last one I will be involved with, as I am moving on to pursue further studies. It has been a privilege to work with and for, so many of you. My sincere thanks to all who contributed to the ICPO newsletter by submitting poems, stories and book reviews. I hope that you have found it interesting and entertaining and please keep the material coming! I also want to thank the staff and volunteers of the London and Maynooth offices for their kindness during my time with ICPO. Their commitment to the work of ICPO and to helping Irish prisoners overseas and their families has been inspiring.

Please accept my very best wishes, wherever you are in the world.

Brian Hanley
ICPO Coordinator

The State of Irish Prisons

On independence in 1922 the new Irish Government inherited a prison system which mirrored the Victorian prison system of England and Wales. Anyone who has seen the inside of Mountjoy, Cork, Limerick or Portlaoise will tell you that things have changed remarkably little in these institutions over the intervening 90 years! Practically all of our political leaders for the first generation after independence had been in prison themselves. However, they showed little interest for improving prison conditions and for most of the twentieth-century Irish prisons were neglected and run down.

From time to time concerns were raised about the treatment of the relatively small number of prisoners detained here, but reports by leading public figures such as Sean McBride and TK Whitaker were largely ignored by Governments. Established in 1994 by a group of clergy, academics and concerned citizens the Irish Penal Reform Trust (IPRT) set about trying to change this. Over the past two decades we have become established as the leading campaigning organisation working for prisoners' rights and reform of Irish prison law and policy.

Since the early 1990s, there has been rapid change in Irish prisons. Our prison population has doubled since the mid-1990s to record levels today. On May 13 of this year there were 4,490 Prisoners in detention with a further 835 on temporary release. In terms of conditions and regimes, some modern prisons such as Wheatfield in Dublin and the Midlands and new blocks at Portlaoise have been built in the last twenty years with decent facilities for education and training. A dedicated remand prison at Cloverhill and a model prison for women, the Dóchas Centre, all signalled an improvement in conditions - but a lot of the hopes for this modernisation has been undermined by worsening overcrowding. Single cells have now been doubled up in most of these prisons, and Cork, Mountjoy and Limerick are even more overcrowded. Shockingly, over 1,000 prisoners in these three older prisons still have to slop-out.

There are also worrying signs that prison violence has been on the increase in recent years. Combined with overcrowding, this means that 23-hour lock up is common practice to ensure protection of prisoners and the small number of open prison options also means that the opportunities and incentives for transfer within the system can be limited. A newly

established Inspector of Prisons is making significant progress and with pressure from Irish and European bodies we are hopeful that we may be turning a corner in addressing many of these issues.

Our prison population has doubled since the mid-1990s to record levels today

In the current economic crisis, a prison population increasing by 11% per year presents a major problem for a Government that can no longer afford to keep building more prisons. The new Government has ordered a review of plans to build a large new prison in north County Dublin (Thornton Hall), and is now looking at ways to reduce the prison population, including ending imprisonment for fine default, an increase in the use of community service, and reform of parole. The much trickier issue of increasingly harsh sentences for crimes like supplying drugs will also have to be faced. At this point in time, IPRT believes that something has to give - the overcrowding levels in the older prisons are unsustainable and some way of reversing the disastrous policies of the last twenty years have to be found.

Transferring back to Ireland is still not easy, but over 140 prisoners have successfully availed of this option since 1995. One major issue to be considered is the rate of remission available in Ireland. Under the 2007 Prison Rules, the standard rate of remission in Ireland is 25%. Although there is provision in the Prison Rules for a higher rate of remission at 33% for prisoners who have "shown further good conduct by engaging in authorised structured activity and the Minister is satisfied that, as a result, the prisoner is less likely to re-offend and will be better able to reintegrate into the community" to date this enhanced remission rate has not been applied. The new government has said that it will review how the system of remission operates.

All of this means that a prisoner serving a sentence in a country with a higher rate of remission can face a later release date if transferred back to Ireland. A number of prisoners have sought to challenge this discrepancy, but so far without success. Under Irish law remission is seen as an administrative function within the discretion of the Irish Prison Service. IPRT will be raising the potential injustice that this system can cause to individuals who want to transfer back to Ireland for family reasons, but who may face significant discrepancies on release dates as a result.

Update from London ICPO Office

It's hard to believe that we are already in June and writing another London Letter!

In December 2010, **Fr Gerry McFlynn** returned to the ICPO as Project Manager after a two and a half year stint as chaplain at Wormwood Scrubs. He is pleased to be back although he said his time at the Scrubs was a happy and invaluable experience. In particular, it gave him an enviable insight into the day-to-day life of prisoners and the problems and issues they encounter. Over the past six months a total of **27 prison visits** were made by **Joseph Cottrell Boyce, Sean Flynn, Sr Mary Horan, Sr Agnes Miller, Sr Maureen McNally and Fr Gerry McFlynn.**

The London office continues to receive an average of 12 -15 letters per day from prisoners requesting everything from money for phone credit to requests for visits, family contact, as well as information about repatriation and transfer. The casework resulting from these letters, phone calls and prison visits, is carried out by the staff team with **Liz Power, Declan Ganley, Sean Flynn** and a team of volunteers including **Sara Thompson, Russ Harland, David Thorpe and Michael Bourke.**

Lifers and those maintaining innocence
Many lifers have served well beyond their original tariff and some continue to maintain their innocence. The ICPO London now works with a group of concerned individuals (including solicitors,

and probation officers) examining the plight of lifers who are having difficulty progressing through the prison system because they maintain their innocence. Fr Gerry has been involved with this group, **Progressing Prisoners Maintaining Innocence (PPMI)**, since its beginning in 2004 and regularly chairs its meetings. The group now has a good working relationship with the Parole Board which is looking to see if it can offer ways forward to lifers maintaining innocence. In January Fr Gerry attended a day long seminar organised by the Group at Matrix Chambers in London. Lifers maintaining innocence can have their cases reviewed by teams of Law students who work as part of the **Innocence Network UK (INUK)** project. Contact the London office for details.

Deportation

Happily, this is no longer the concern it once was thanks to the current agreement between the British and Irish governments dating back to 2007. However, the London office continues to hear from prisoners in receipt of letters from the UK Border Agency informing them that they may be considered for deportation. Prisoners who receive these letters should write to the London office with a copy of the UK Border Agency letter.

Travellers

For many years the ICPO has been concerned about the problems experienced by prisoners from a Traveller back-

ground. However, much of this information was based on anecdotal evidence acquired from the ICPO's own practice experience and reinforced by our partnership with chaplains and foreign national co-ordinators across the prison estate. Now, thanks to research conducted by the Traveller Project Manager, **Conn MacGabhann**, we have at last both quantitative and qualitative information. The research, which included personal interviews and focus group meetings, has just been completed and indicates that Irish Travellers represent over 0.5% of the overall prison population. The main challenges identified by the survey include poor literacy, high levels of health issues, lack of family contact, isolation, and discrimination. The final report of the findings, along with policy and practice recommendations, is due for publication later this month.

Holy Week Stations

On Monday of Holy Week, members of the Irish Chaplaincy held a Stations of the Cross in a local parish church. The Stations, incorporating the three Chaplaincy projects - Prisoners, Travellers, and Elderly Irish Persons - were especially written and produced by Fr Gerry McFlynn, Helen Pooley and Philomena Cullen.

Best wishes from the London Team and here's hoping the next six months go as quickly for you as the past six have for us!

Fr Gerry and the ICPO team

Congratulations to the **ICPO Art Competition Winners**

The Overall Winner was Stuart Richardson

The category winners were as follows:

Category 1 - **Prison Life**

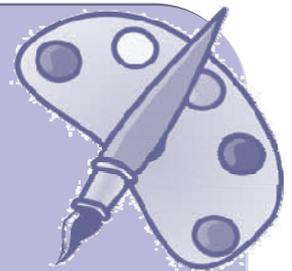
Category 2 - **Memories of Home**

Category 3 - **Experiences of Emigration**

Anthony Cawley, HMP Frankland

Michael Perrick, HMP Kingston

Stuart Richardson, HMP Holme House.



OVERVIEW OF CONFERENCE

Bridging the Distance

On Tuesday, 11th November 2010, ICPO marked its 25th year in existence by holding a conference in Dublin. The theme of the conference was 'Bridging the Distance - Supporting Irish prisoners overseas and their families'. Amongst the 150 people present, were the families of prisoners' overseas, penfriend volunteers, representatives of voluntary and statutory bodies, Government Departments, IECE Board Members, representatives of the Irish Chaplaincy in Britain and ICPO staff and volunteers, past and present. The conference was chaired by Dearbhail McDonald, Legal Affairs Editor at the Irish Independent.

Following welcoming remarks from Bishop Séamus Hegarty, Bishop Christopher Jones addressed the gathering on the importance of providing pastoral support to prisoners and their families;

'We know that the lives of many, many young people can be scarred by poverty, drugs and general disadvantage but we also believe that with kindness, compassion and care, the dignity and beauty of the individual can be rediscovered and restored.'

After Bishop Jones's address, ICPO founding member, President Mary McAleese attended the conference. She met privately with the families of prisoners (past and present) and delivered a wonderful address which we have reproduced in full in this newsletter.

Jago Russell, Chief Executive of Fair Trials International, in addressing the conference, gave a comprehensive report on the difficulties experienced by many people during their arrest, trial and detention. He highlighted some of the challenges which exist in accessing a fair trial. What was particularly interesting was the fact that concerns surrounding fair trials are not exclusive to the legal systems in developing countries.

Other speakers at the conference included Marie Cross, Assistant Secretary at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Lisa Cuthbert, Chief Executive of PACE, who spoke about the challenges experienced by returning ex-prisoners in need of post release supports in Ireland. The Director of the Irish Chaplaincy in Britain, Philomena Cullen and Research Coordinator, Conn MacGabhann, discussed the research currently underway regarding the needs of Irish Travellers imprisoned in Britain.

The conference closed with an emotional account from a former ICPO client about the difficulties he and his family faced during his imprisonment. He spoke movingly about the loneliness and isolation he experienced, the language barriers he faced and the difficulties in getting visits from his family. It was very important to have a voice at the conference representing the difficulties experienced by so many of you.

One of the highlights for those present was the fact that families of prisoners, representatives of State bodies, volunteers, penfriends and other guests mixed freely throughout the day. While the conference afforded an opportunity for people to come together and acknowledge the work of the ICPO over the years, more importantly, it gave a forum to discuss the very real challenges facing Irish prisoners overseas and how they will be tackled.

Brian Hanley - ICPO Coordinator



Dearbhail McDonald,
Legal Editor, Irish
Independent



Jago Russell, CEO,
Fair Trials Interna-
tional



Marie Cross, Assis-
tant Secretary, Pass-
port and Consular
Division at the Dept
of Foreign Affairs.



Conn MacGabhann and
Philomena Cullen, Irish
Chaplaincy in Britain.

Bridging the Distance ICPO 25 years

Remarks by President Mary McAleese at the 25th Anniversary Conference

Dia dhíbh go leir a chairde.

I get to attend many anniversary events as President but this is one of the few where I can say I was there when it started those twenty-five too short years ago. I am very grateful to Brian Hanley for kindly inviting me to open this Anniversary Conference and the chance it gives me to say thank you for the fidelity this Commission has shown to Irish Prisoners and their families since that launch back in 1985.

Then as now, prisoners do not easily evoke public sympathy or concern. Their alleged crimes or convictions have a way of putting distance between them and the general public yet, at any given time, there are probably around 1,000 Irish men and women in prisons abroad. None of us would argue that if they have broken the law they have to go through the criminal processes and pay the penalty but those processes and that penalty are seriously aggravated if you are in prison in a strange country or culture, isolated from family and friends. What is more, the awful injustice visited upon the Maguire family, the Birmingham Six and the Guildford Four, which the Commission championed when it was singularly unpopular to do so, should teach us something about the potential for human frailty and fallibility of processes, particularly where they are under enormous pressure. There is a care that is needed for prisoners abroad and their families and a vigilance for justice that is embodied in the work of the Commission.

The circumstances which bring people into contact with ICPO can differ wildly. Many will involve prisoners in Britain but they could also be in any part of the

world and the great strength of ICPO has always been its location at the heart of the Social Justice outreach of the Irish Catholic Church, as a sub-committee of its Council for Emigrants. The Church has access to a unique global pastoral network with an ethic of care for the outcast and for the prisoner. That ethic, that commandment to love even the most marginalised, is fundamental to the work of ICPO whose services are offered to all Irish prisoners regardless of creed or crime and it is expressed through a range of support, advocacy and information services nowadays part funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs Emigrant Support Programme, the Irish Catholic Church, the SVDP and many fundraisers who have made this their cause. Aside from the services offered by our embassies abroad, no-one apart from ICPO is doing this work. It is done by a small cohort of professional paid staff and a team of volunteers whose invaluable work helps ICPO to stretch its reach and its services for they are able to draw on pro bono expertise across all the complex areas that care for prisoners provokes.

Over the past twenty five years, as many people turned away from prisoners and washed their hands of them, it was your unexpected and reliable hand of friendship which let them know that they had an innate dignity that no system could overwhelm and no act of their own could obliterate. As families struggled to deal with distance, unfamiliar places and judicial systems, different languages, money worries and the hard reality of imprisonment, its effect on family life, its effect on life chances downstream, you were and are their rock, their centre of gravity, their guide through hard to navigate waters.



Staff and Volunteers from ICPO Maynooth and London offices who attended the conference together with President Mary McAleese, Bishop Séamus Hegarty and Bishop Christopher Jones.

None of this work was ever done for thanks, for recognition or for an expectation that it might change lives around. Yet it has changed lives. I think today of Anne Maguire stepping into then Prime Minister Tony Blair's office to receive a public apology for the wrong that robbed her, her husband and family of precious years of family life. It was thanks to ICPO's insistent advocacy among others that the truth eventually emerged. It is thanks to ICPO that prisoners' families who feel unable to cope are reassured that there is help and they will get through the obstacle course ahead. It is thanks to ICPO that so many men and

women in prison have access to your practical, pastoral care which honours so convincingly those challenging words in St Matthew's gospel - "I was in prison and you visited me".

Martin Luther King once said that "darkness is only driven out by light." Twenty-five years ago a small group of men and women lit a light that has quietly but emphatically driven out darkness in many lives. It would be impossible to ever truly or fully quantify the good that ICPO has done, for the numbers of clients dealt with and the nature of their circumstances tell only a tiny part of the narrative. The rest is filled out by hours of talking, holding hands, drying tears, reassuring, organising advice, information, accompanying families on visits, writing letters to prisoners, writing letters to key influencers in order to advocate human rights or justice issues, smiling a smile of welcome as a nervous mother comes across the door for the first time, being there the day a prisoner is released to help life begin again who can count such things? We can on this day only acknowledge them with gratitude.

I thank all who have made the work of ICPO their business these past twenty-five years. I thank all those who

have used its services and vindicated the decision to found this Commission and to sustain it through all sorts of ups and downs. I am conscious that two of those first founders have gone much too early to their heavenly home, John O'Connell and Fr Breifne Walker. They would be pleased to see ICPO make this anniversary so vibrant and so dynamic with a history of remarkable success behind it and a secure, determined future in front of it. This work is relentless. It is ever-changing and ever-needed. I hope this Conference fills each one of you with enthusiasm for the next part of the journey and that in the sharing here of experience and ideas there will be a fresh, distilled wisdom to guide the next best steps of ICPO at the start of the next 25 years. ICPO taught me a lot. I will be forever grateful to have been part of it.

Thank you again for inviting me here as you celebrate this special anniversary and to wish you well in your continued efforts on behalf of Irish prisoners throughout the world.

Go raibh míle maith agaibh go léir.

ICPO LONDON—25th ANNIVERSARY CONCERT 2010

The anniversary celebrations turned out to be something quite different from what had originally been planned. The long planned and much anticipated night was almost ruined by the weather when the headline act, traditional band, **ALTAN** from Donegal, had to cancel their performance due to being snowbound in Donegal and unable to make it even to the nearest airport! But showing the sort of resilience and 'never give up' spirit which has helped them through the past quarter century working with some of the most vulnerable Irish people in custody in Britain, staff moved quickly to recruit the acclaimed **London Lasses** with **Pete Quinn** to perform at the anniversary celebrations instead.



The Chair of the Trustees of the ICB, **John Walsh**, said: "We are so grateful to all our supporters who turned out on one of the coldest nights of the year to help us fundraise so that we can continue to offer support to Irish prisoners and their families".

As with any anniversary there was also time for reflection on past achievements of the ICPO. **Gareth Peirce**, the

famed Human Rights solicitor who worked to secure the freedom of the innocent Birmingham 6 and Guildford 4 defendants, was at the event and was presented with the ICPO Achievement Award, in recognition of her work on behalf of Irish prisoners and their families. Presenting the award was Guilford 4 member, **Gerry Conlon**, who also spoke at the event. He drew parallels between the plight of the Muslim community in Britain today and the discrimination the Irish community suffered in the 70's and 80's, when to be Irish was to be part of a suspect community. He reminded those present that: "An injustice suffered by one is an injustice suffered by all".

As **Bishop Seamus Hegarty** couldn't attend, his place was taken by another Irish bishop, Dr **Donal McKeown**, from Down and Connor. The night also saw the launch of the ICB's first ever Cairde/Friends scheme which involves asking people to support the work of the charity on a regular basis by direct debit giving. Launching the scheme, the Director of the ICB, **Philomena Cullen**, said: "In these tough economic times, we increasingly rely on the generosity of our individual donors to maintain our existing services to vulnerable Irish emigrants. All giving, large and small, really does make a difference. Just £5 per month could provide an Irish prisoner with phone credit so that they can continue to be in touch with their families who, living in Ireland, are often unable to visit". It was a fitting reminder of the importance of our work and what we were celebrating. The music, dancing and conversation continued well into the evening and a good time was had by all present.

THE POWER OF POSITIVE THINKING

"Bloom Where You're Planted" is what this article is about. We are free to choose how we respond to our daily experiences. Think of a weed growing in a garden. Any gardener will know that no matter how often you cut it back or dig it up, it will just grow back again. It continues to bloom without "considering" other possibilities. It adapts to the situation it finds itself in. On the other hand, we human beings are almost always thinking: "I'd be happy if only... if only I had more freedom.... or more money, or more friends...." The list can be a long one! Yet all any of us has in reality is the present moment. Our happiness depends on how well we live this very moment.

Vicktor Frankl, was an Austrian doctor who spent three years in a concentration camp in the most appalling conditions. He wrote a book afterwards called "Man's Search for Meaning," which was based on his experience of the concentration camp. He claimed that life can always have meaning and be bearable no matter what, if one has something or someone to live for. It was the thought of his wife and his love for her that kept him going. He began to realise that when everything else was taken away he still had the freedom to choose his attitude to whatever happened. His motto was: "He who has a why to live, can bear almost any how." (Nietzsche)

One way to develop a positive attitude to life is to begin to notice when we have negative, upsetting thoughts, and then work at putting more positive thoughts in their place. This in turn affects how we feel and act.

For instance, suppose you wrote to a friend three weeks ago and he didn't write back. You might think "He doesn't care about me." The first part is fact - he didn't write back. The second part - that he doesn't care about you - is a negative thought, and it may or may not be true. However the negative thought causes feelings of disappointment, or anger, or feelings of being unloved. You could look at it differently "O.K. He hasn't replied, but that does not necessarily mean that he

doesn't care." In other words, choose more agreeable thoughts: "Perhaps he never got my letter." "Perhaps his letter was delayed in the post." Notice how much better you feel. You end up looking forward to the next letter, knowing that it will come eventually. You might even decide to write again. These positive feelings can then affect other aspects of your life.

Let's take another example:

You were expecting a visitor who did not show up. You think: "She is not interested in my welfare. She has forgotten all about me". These thoughts result in feelings of loneliness, self-pity, disappointment. A different way to look at it might be: "I don't know what happened, maybe one of the children was sick... Maybe she missed the train..." "I know she cares..." If you allow these more positive, and perhaps more realistic thoughts to sink in you will have more positive feelings, and life will seem better generally.

When something happens to upset you, you may have NEGATIVE THOUGHTS about it and as a result, you have NEGATIVE FEELINGS.

However, you can choose to think more POSITIVE THOUGHTS which lead to more POSITIVE FEELINGS. This gives more POSITIVE RESULTS in daily life and by degrees you will begin to feel happier.

If you get into the habit of taking some time every day to replace negative, critical thoughts, with more appropriate, positive ones, you will notice that you will begin to feel better about life and have a more positive attitude to all that happens.

Thought Replacement



It's impossible to think of two things at the same time!

Mary Whyte

The ICPO is a full member of the European Organisation for Probation (CEP), Special Interest Group on Foreign National Prisoners. This is a network of independent organisations which support European citizens imprisoned outside their country of residence and their families. The aim of this Special Interest Group (SIG) is to promote the welfare and interests of European citizens who are detained outside their country of residence, in order to facilitate their social reintegration.

In March of this year ICPO attended the Prisoners Abroad Conference in Utrecht, The Netherlands. Various organisations and interested parties came together to discuss the issue of social rehabilitation of nationals in foreign prisons and how to deal with foreigners in one's own prison system. The day also became a platform for the presentation of a Business Case that states the importance of effective measures and services to support ex-offenders upon their release. Rolf Streng, head of the foreign office of the Dutch Probation Agency, and John Walters, member of the board of Prisoners Abroad (and former CEP Secretary General), co-authored the Business Case, with contributions from ICPO, Prisoners Abroad and the Dutch Probation Agency. With the Business Case, the SIG has set out its strategy to promote better care for this special group of prisoners. The introductory note makes a number of key points along the following lines.

It is widely recognised that resettlement work should be undertaken with prisoners both during sentence and following release to secure their reintegration into the community and to reduce ... (the possibility) ... of re-offending. A substantial number of prisoners are held in countries from which they will be deported on release. There are few countries in Europe where the country to which they will return has any planned services to assist with their resettlement. This paper draws on the experience of countries where resettlement services are provided for 'prisoners abroad' and demonstrates that there is both a humanitarian and a business case for this work.

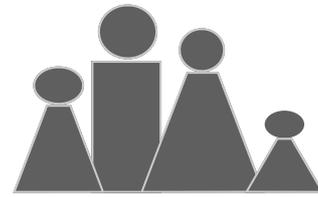
Framework decisions of the European Union provide for the transfer of prisoners and of community sanctions recognising that this facilitates the social rehabilitation of sentenced persons However, these provisions will affect only a small proportion of foreign national prisoners of European origin as many are imprisoned outside the EU.

The problems of resettlement faced by men and women returning home or deported from prison abroad are much greater than those faced by those imprisoned within their own country. However, the risks can be reduced by dedicated resettlement services.

Services provided in The Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Ireland are described in the report. The organisations providing these services differ and there is clearly no one model of organisation though all demonstrate that government funding is considerably augmented by other resources. CEP considers that all countries in Europe should have a strategy for the reintegration of men and women returning from prison abroad and calls on the relevant authorities to plan for the provision of such services.

ICPO will continue to work with its European counterparts to improve the level of post release supports available to prisoners serving sentences overseas

Brian Hanley
ICPO Coordinator



This section is for families who have a loved one in prison.
Do you have useful information that may be helpful to other families?
Have you a question you would like to see answered on this page in the future?
If so, please contact Anne Sheehy, Support Worker, ICPO, Maynooth.

TELLING THE CHILDREN WHEN A PARENT IS IN PRISON

(Adapted from a Guide for Parents and Carers
prepared by the Society of St. Vincent de Paul)

When a family member has to go to prison, one of the decisions to be made is who to tell. What does one say to children, other family members, friends and neighbours? While each situation is different, and prisoners and their families may decide for their own good reasons not to share this information, the following may be helpful when arriving at that decision.

Why Tell the Children?

If children are not told when a parent is in prison, they may come to their own conclusions and usually what they imagine is likely to be much worse and more frightening than the reality, for instance that their parent will never be allowed home again. It can be helpful therefore, to tell children about the situation their parent is in. If you decide not to tell the children, someone else may tell them, and the children may feel that they can't be trusted, or that what is happening is too frightening for them to know about, and this can be very upsetting.

When Should They be Told?

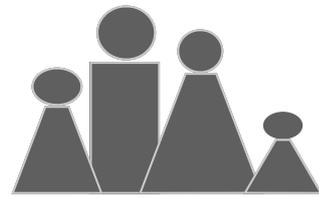
It is best if children are told as soon as possible. Here are some guidelines:

- (a) Take enough time to come to terms with the sentence yourself. If you are upset, they will be too.
- (b) Take time to plan what you are going to say. Make sure that other family members are aware of what the children are being told. If they receive different information from different people, they will be confused.
- (c) Choose a time and place to tell them when you will not be interrupted.
- (d) Tell them clearly and concisely, and keep checking that they understand.
- (e) Give them time to re-act, to show their feelings, and to ask questions.
- (f) Try not to get upset yourself. They need you to be strong.

How Should They be Told?

You know your children best and you are in the best position to know how much information they will need, and how you will tell them. The following points may be helpful:

- (a) Information should be suitable to the age of the children. Small children will not understand too much; they just need to know that Daddy/Mummy will be coming home eventually. If visits are not likely to happen for cost and distance reasons, tell them how they can keep in touch in other ways. Older children will need more information such as where their parent is and how long he or she will be there for.



- (b) As far as possible for the children's sake the missing parent needs to be spoken about in a positive light.
- (c) All children need to know that their parent will be okay, not only by telling them, but also by allowing the child to visit if possible. You know your children best and whether they would be able for a prison visit. Contact ICPO for advice and help with the cost of travel.
- (d) Children can be encouraged to draw pictures to represent their feelings, or if old enough, to write about them. Parents can then discuss these feelings with their children. Parents can also share some of their own feelings with their children.

Behaviour Changes

The children will be affected by the imprisonment of a family member whether you tell them or not, but parents often worry about how they will react to the news, and how they will be affected by it.

Often it will show in their behaviour which may change in one way or another. Children may go into themselves, become very quiet and moody, or they may react by behaving badly. No matter how they behave, you will have to be patient, but also firm. Keep the channel of communication open so that if the child is being bullied at school, for instance, they will come home and tell you about it. Children need a lot of support and help throughout the sentence. They need to be constantly reassured.

They also need to know that everything may not be the same as it was before their parent went into prison. The parent outside and the children will have developed new roles and routines. The ex-prisoner may need time to find his place in the family unit, especially if he/she has served a long sentence.

What About Unkind Remarks from Others?

You cannot protect your child from the hurtful things others may say.

- All you can do is be there for them. Help them to feel secure and loved.
- Give them as much information as possible so that they will not be at a disadvantage, or in shock, if someone is unkind.
- It helps if you speculate about what might occur, and plan what the child could say in response to unkind remarks, or whether it would be better to ignore the remark and walk away.
- Encourage your child to release anger and emotion through play and to use their imagination through role play, which may help them to deal with any problems they may be experiencing, rather than letting all the anger and upset build up, which can lead to a lot of difficult behaviour.

Children can be helped greatly in dealing with a loved one's imprisonment if they have the support of caring adults who understand that, in general, children love their parents, even when they have committed a crime.



Your Letters



The Blackhole of Guatemala

I arrived in Guatemala in 2003 after being in Nicaragua doing a dive course. While there I met a traveling musician from Australia called 'Flower' who said that I had the same sense of humour as another friend of his, a musician also, who lived beside a lake called Atitlan in Guatemala. He said he was English, from Suffolk, who played Irish and Reggae music. I asked him a few questions about this person and it turned out I knew this person from Holland 20 years previous.

So I get his address and got in touch with my buddy who said come on up. He had a whole food store, a restaurant and an apartment. It seemed like a good plan, me being a chef, so a job possibility. I travelled overland to Honduras, Salvador and then to the highlands where the lake was.



What a spectacular place, 6000' altitude, surrounded by volcanoes and 1500' deep and an ever-changing view. The locals were mainly Mayan. The main dialect was Mayan, then Spanish and Spanglish. Most of the villagers were only accessible by boat and it still seemed to be living in a time past. The traditions, the customs, the dress. The people were so friendly and non

aggressive so unlike other parts of Central America. To go on the boat to the market every day and to be greeted by the rainbow colours of their colourful costumes. Each village had their own designs and their smiles made even a miserable old git like me smile.

It was inexpensive to live, the climate perfect for me. Once the sun came up it got into the 80 °s and pleasant in the evenings down to the 20s. Also because of the altitude hardly any mozzies.

Almost perfect, except for, as with all countries that were colonised in the past, they were vulnerable to twisted influences of that time and the pettiness of small minded communities that no matter where you go in this world you will always encounter.

In 2006 I was arrested because of a 'chinese whisper'. I knew it was coming but I didn't care - why should I when I knew it wasn't true. I ended up in a police holding cell in the main town. It was 18 meters by 8 meters. There were between 60 and 70 people there, 14 beds, no natural light and no exercise yard so it was 'bang up' for 24/7.

Some people had been there for over 2 years. There was 1 toilet, 1 shower and 1 sink. The rats outnumbered the prisoners and at night you could feel them running over you and stopping to do some 'rat chat' on your chest. It was cockroach heaven, a paradise for fleas, ants and lots of other unidentifiable creatures and insects. The only way you got fed was what your visi-

tors brought or if you had money, what the guards would buy for you if you paid them for their troubles.

The only way to get a bed was to buy one and that was only when someone left or if you could outbid the other people who wanted one. Otherwise you slept on the floor with the alcos, locos and smellies. I had been there 2 months when, with the help of the Consulate and a few minor protests, we managed to get the Human Rights Inter Americano to visit and within a week we were all moved out to other prisons and the black hole of Solola was closed.

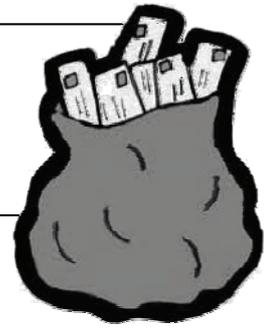
We were all moved to other prisons around the country that had exercise yards and more space to sleep, not much better but better than where we were. But that created other problems because of the distance - 160 miles = 4 hours by bus each way and at times the weather was 100 degrees with humidity around 90%. Also no more visits because it would take around 12 hours there and back so things got tougher, also millions of mozzies.

So out of hell and into an inferno. Where I ended up was strange, the guards ruled the outside of the prison, their job was to stop people escaping, and the prisoners ruled the inside. The only times the guards came in was for searches riots and also if someone died, to bring out the body before it got smelly.

There was basic medical care, a corrupt doctor and an 'Igor' type of



Your Letters



nurse, no dentist. If you had a dental problem you waited about 6 months and all he did was extractions. Otherwise the only way to get treatment was to pay for it and you would have to pay double to what it would cost normally. It was a struggle just to survive on a daily basis. I was being held without trial. The strategy behind this was to force me to pay for my freedom and also to make me say I was guilty for a crime that never happened.



Photos taken on a phone camera inside the prison and therefore the quality is not the very best.

I would have paid for my freedom but I would never say I was guilty to something I hadn't done. I wrongly assumed that within months the truth would come out or that when I got to trial I would go free. But every time I got a trial date the prosecution would appeal 1 day before the trial and I would have to

wait for another year. This went on for four years. After two years I knew what the game was and realised that I was in for the long run.

From the very get go I found that most people left me alone, maybe because of the language barrier or for the fact that I was the only white guy there or because of my nature being Irish I kept myself to myself and explained as best as I could not to put their rules on me and I wouldn't put my rules on them. I was a gang of '1' because people there knew the only thing I was guilty of was being stubborn. Also they knew I had the support of the Consulate so even the guards didn't bother me.

After about 5 months into this situation, the ICPO managed to get in touch with me. An angel called Grainne spoke to me and introduced me to the organisation and let me know what they were about. I never realised that they were there. Things were pretty tough at the time, health wise, nutrition wise and trying to communicate wise. Also at this time I thought it was a one man battle against the system. So by them getting in touch and letting me know that there was someone looking out for me gave me the fortitude to continue my fight for due process and justice. They also got me in touch with the Fair Trials International. who, in turn, kept an eye on the situation. They re-established communications with me and kept the Embassy updated with the process. Also when I would hit a low or complication ICPO would help me see past the barrier and keep things in perspective. Or even if I just needed a rant and a rave about whatever, they would help me keep

objectivity and focus on the point which was the principal of the issue.

So in February 2011 I managed to go to trial. It was a trial to get there. After a month of the trial I was found not guilty and completely absolved and released on the 26th February 2011.

So with the help of the ICPO and the Irish Embassy and Consulate I was making arrangements to leave Guatemala then I was told my visa had expired and they wanted me to pay €2500 fine before I could go. Yet again the ICPO and the Embassy got involved and helped me with this problem. I had been out of Ireland for the best part of 9 years, so coming back here was a challenge in itself. With the help of the ICPO and the Irish Embassy, they created a situation which smoothed out my return. I am now back in Ireland with my daughter and her mother. I am still trying to adjust and work out what it was all about. But I know I will get there in the end. Because there is only one way to go and that's forward. As to that question Shakespeare asked 'to be or not to be', well the answer is easy TO BE, what else. We all know that, we just need to realise it.

Thanks to Gráinne, Sr Anne, Kate, Brian and all the staff at the ICPO also to Emma, Myles, Adrianna and Derek 'the man' at the Irish Embassy in Mexico Roberto and Evelyn at the Consulate Guatemala and the numerous other people who were in the background who made this ordeal bearable and endurable.

P.F. ex-Guatemala



Your Letters



BULLOCKS, BULLS AND COWS ...

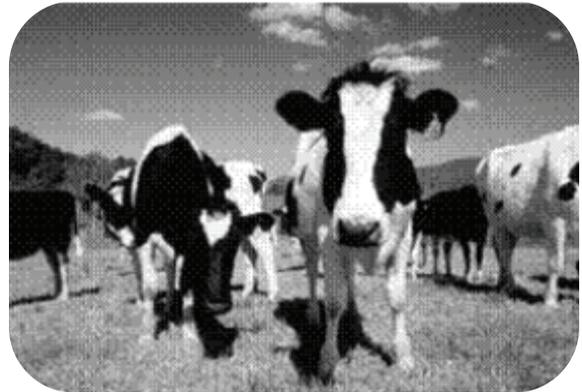
A prisoner in the UK who writes to ICPO volunteer Sr Agnes regularly has given us permission to reproduce excerpts from his letters. He is at an open prison in the UK and his powers of observation and communication with the animals are fascinating.

I've been busy with work, but I enjoy it all as I feel right at home. The lanes up to the farm are a picture. The walk is worthy of being captured on a postcard - trees in full cover, fields like lush green carpets, pheasants, finches, tits, lapwings, and jackdaws aplenty.

The cattle are spread amongst several fields. The first field sees Renegade, the ould bull, with his tribe of cows and calves, twelve in all. Renegade has been slipping off to cool down in the barn, he's an ould softy for sure. Ingot, one of the cows, thinks at times that she's a ram, and thumps you, but it's not long before she's standing for a scratch. Ould Ella has cracked teats, finding it hard to feed her calf. But the cream has done its job. Aullie, Neb and Heddar, three more of the cows, saunter over with their calves, just to check everything out, and Gemma stands for a pampering, until your arms are falling off. But it's all grand, so many characters in one place and bringing them in has become simplistic and makes life easy for checks on the calves and the cattle's welfare.

In the next field we have seven bullocks who follow you across, like carriages on a train. They are waiting for their treat of beet. The darkest one of them is like Lynford Christie, the ould sprinter, when the beet is put in the trough. The other six jockey for their places. They have come on well, and fattened up quickly. It's grand seeing them where they belong, out in the fields.

The next field sees fourteen of last year's calves and there are some good ones for sure. They are always about you for a scratch and petting. Ould Bramble with her calf take it easy, ould Florence with her calf, and Mauritania is due to calve in May. She's a strange one, one minute she stands for a scratch, the next she's lining you up for a thumping. I suppose she's just cranky, with having to carry a kicking calf, but all this year's calves so far are doing well.



One of the heifers had her calf this morning, a beautiful addition to the herd, and Bramble is to calf any moment too, and soon they'll all be put out to pasture, some of last year's calves taken to shows where I think they will do well, and the confirmation is grand. The young bull - Quidditch - is enjoying his freedom out of the bull pen. He comes up for a scratch whilst we are cleaning up and bedding down. The old bull Renegade thinks he's a dog, and we have a heifer who thinks she's a bull. Some real characters for sure. I just thank God for giving me the opportunity to do work I know and really enjoy. I cannot ask for any more.

Well, over in Cooper's Field there are three bullocks who need fattening and are a bit scrawny compared to the rest, but I'm sure with time, they will come good. They are a bit shy still at the moment.

In the field across the road from the prison, Quidditch the bull is in fine form, and his youthful personality shines through. He's like a spring lamb at times, and also approachable for some petting. The cows and calves are coming on in leaps and bounds. It's amazing to see such wonders thriving, and at one with mother nature. It makes one feel right at home, and with stock farming your work is never done, so it's not for the work-shy or faint-hearted. I'm just grateful to be working with two good gaffers, and a good bunch of boys who are characters too, with personalities that could bring sunshine into most people's lives, disproving the myths that all convicts are bad. We are put on different paths for reasons unbeknown, but eventually we'll have the answers to the final pieces of the jigsaw.

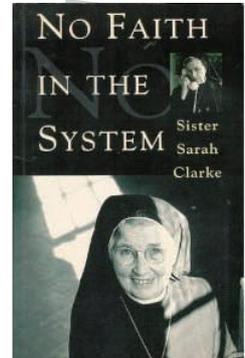
For those who have never experienced such wonderful encounters, it's eye opening and life changing for sure.

BOOK REVIEW

No Faith in the System.

Author: Sister Sarah Clark

Some people would call this wonderful woman 'The Joan of Arc of Prisons' and they wouldn't be far off the mark. For those of you reading this review who remember the following names, you can't help but thinking of the inhumane treatment of Irish men and women throughout the English prison system in the 70's and 80's: The Guildford Four, the Birmingham Six and the Maguire Family. No Faith in the System gives the reader a new look into the horror show that Irish people went through when the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) was brought into effect in the year 1974.



The (PTA) gave English law enforcement the right to arrest and hold Irish people without charge. Sister Sarah will take you into the homes and hearts of the mothers, sons and daughters of the innocent men and women whose freedom was snatched up for no other reason that the fact they were born on the island of Ireland or in some cases had relations who were Irish.

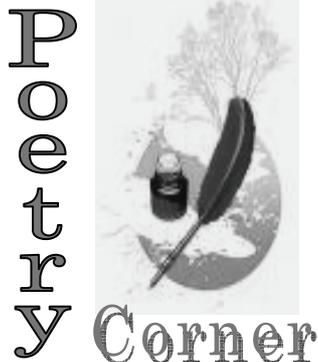
She wrote this book from notes she kept over the years which include her passion for those who scraped the money to get over to England to find their loved ones who vanished in the prisons. She tells of her battle with the Church at times for the work she was doing and the love of her Mother Superior who let her put families up in the convent and helped her to get a car to drive these broken people from prison to prison.

Sister Sarah will take you into the world of violence that many inmates inflicted on them and you will read of the death of an innocent man who most of you will remember when you read this book.

I had the pleasure of meeting Sr. Sarah in Belfast on my birthday, back in the 80's. How I missed the feeling that I was in the midst of a living saint, I will never know because that's what she was. I requested this book via the ICPO's book programme and I wondered if any of today's staff know that the ICPO wouldn't be what it is, if it wasn't for 'The Joan of Arc of Prisons'. May she rest in peace.

Peter Groome, U.S.

Armagh's Stone



In Armagh's green and rugged hills
Beneath her heavy rainfilled skies,
A simple stone it marks the place
Where an Irish soldier lies.

Just a lad of sixteen summers
He proudly answered Ireland's call;
Stepped out boldly with the Fenian men
For freedom's cause to give his all.

There upon that raging battlefield
Amid the mud, the blood and death;
He clasped the green flag to his heart
And blessed it with his dying breath.

In Armagh's green and rugged hills
Gaze upon that simple stone once more;
Lest the foe steal from peace
That which they could not win in war.

J.F. United Kingdom



Sports

By Eoin O'Mahoney

Gaelic Games

It is June so it must be the new Championship season. The League competition in the first three months of the year provided some pointers but with the summer upon us, the real prize awaits in September.

In Munster, where both codes are fervently followed, Cork and Kerry remain dominant. While Cork can claim their champions title, Kerry are looking to regain their former strength. Both teams made it out of their early fixtures with little difficulty and now face each other in early July for the first of the season's must-see fixtures. In the hurling, Tipperary have beaten Cork with the rebels now going into the qualifiers. Waterford and Limerick can provide some challenge to the All-Ireland champions but it is too early in the season yet to call who will come out of Munster.

In Leinster, Dublin are looking to consolidate their League wins and their new hurling prowess. Laois looked strong but the Dubs soon put paid to their ambitions, beating them by 8 points. Meath have to restructure their game following a close run affair with Kildare. The prospect of a Dublin Kildare final in late June is relished. In hurling, it's all about Kilkenny but Dublin might well pose a threat. The latter got past Offaly and now face Galway while Kilkenny are to face Wexford.

In Ulster, Derry and Down hurlers look good. Derry and Armagh looked strong early on but Donegal too are looking ominous. Armagh play Derry in the first of the known semi-finals and whoever comes out of the province will face a tough challenge from Munster and Leinster teams.

In Connacht football, Mayo were lucky to get past London in Ruislip and Sligo's misfortunes appear historic as they could not get past lowly Leitrim. Mayo play Galway in the first of the semis while Leitrim now play Roscommon. If Mayo can get past the Tribesmen, they might make some progress but that is itself a difficult task.

Football

The Airtricity League Premier Divisions competition is well underway again. Right now, Shamrock Rovers look very strong again with 15 games played and 31 points amassed. Their scoring record is prodigious with 21 goals scored in those games and only 6 conceded. While Sligo Rovers are currently riding high, and the prospect of Europa League action to come later this summer, the Bit O'Red can look forward to a good year. Derry City and St Patrick's Athletic are hoping to break the Shams' League run.

In England, Manchester United's record 19th League win came a little easier than the late spurt of poor results would have implied. Both Chelsea and Arsenal effectively handed them the title and with Ancelotti now out of the picture, the Blues can look toward a closed season of team building. Money is the order of the day with early talk of both United and Liverpool looking to spend big this summer.

Internationally, the Group B competition between the Republic of Ireland, Russia and Slovakia is hotting up as we look towards the 2012 European finals. Trapattoni is building a good, if a little unimaginative, team and with all three teams now on 13 points, it might come down to goal difference when the final set of winter matches come around. The Republic won a four team tournament called the Carling Nations Cup held in Dublin in recent weeks, beating Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland on the way to the first piece of silverware in many years. Trapattoni has a good spirit in this team and with Keane still scoring and an ageing core being replaced by new players, 2012 might be a good year for Irish international soccer.

Rugby

In the **Heineken Cup final** held in Cardiff Leinster conjured the greatest comeback in the final's history to collect their second European title and leave Northampton painfully reflecting on a season without silverware. Northampton appeared to be home and dry following first-half, showing a score of 22-6.



Majestic Moment for Jonathan
Leinster's Jonathan Sexton lifts the Heineken Cup after his side's win against Northampton in Cardiff. Photo: Gerry Mooney

However, Ireland fly-half Jonathan Sexton wasn't accepting defeat and came out on fire in the second half; he showed his strength, determination and belief that the team had the ability to turn this match around. He scored 28 of Leinster's points - two tries, four penalties and three conversions.

Incredibly, Leinster moved effortlessly ahead by the hour mark, before a try from their Scotland international lock Nathan Hines sealed a spectacular success underpinned by them scoring 27 unanswered second-half points.

Leinster, showed them the harsh reality of life at European rugby's sharp end, with Ireland international Sexton taking command just when his team needed it most. Sexton who finished two points short of equalling Diego Dominguez's Heineken record haul for Stade Francais in the 2001 final against Leicester.

Leinster's double dreams were wrecked, however, by arch-rivals Munster who deservedly finished the season as **Magners League Champions**. Tries from

wingers Doug Howlett and Keith Earls, allied to a late penalty try, helped Munster bring the Heineken Cup winners back down to earth. Paul O'Connell and his team-mates outfought a tired-looking Leinster side who could only muster three penalties from Jonathan Sexton. A sparkling run and pass from O'Driscoll got Leinster immediately into scoring range after the break. But with just 20 minutes remaining it was anybody's game.

Leinster's hopes were extinguished by the concession of a third try. One of their strengths all season, the scrum, let them down as Munster drove them back at an alarming rate on two occasions and referee Nigel Owens signalled for a penalty try. O'Gara's conversion took the lead to 10 points and Leinster were denied a late try as both Kevin McLaughlin and Nathan Hines were stopped by Munster's dogged defence.

Irish rugby is now dominant among the European nations and we can look forward to seeing how this plays out in the WRC World Cup in New Zealand later this year.

Other sports

Ireland's track and field athletes are getting ready for London 2012 and can look forward to a measure of home advantage in some events. Katie Taylor secured her fourth European Union boxing title on the trot after defeating Poland's Graczyk in the Lightweight final in Poland.

Death of former Taoiseach Garret FitzGerald

Garret FitzGerald who was twice Taoiseach passed away, aged 85. He was unlike every other leading politician of his generation, a man completely without guile and cunning. Even his severest critics - and there were plenty - invariably prefaced their tirades against him by conceding that he was one of the nicest men in Irish politics. He was described as possessing all the legendary Irish charm, but without the blarney which sometimes goes with it.

Long after he departed active politics, Garret continued to contribute to public life through his voluminous writing and scholarship. His weekly columns in the Irish Times were essential reading for those who sought enlightenment on the issues and debates of the day. President Mary McAleese described him as 'one of our national treasures'



Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam.



Smíidín Gaeilge

Charles Stuart Parnell, who died in November 1891 aged 45, was called the 'uncrowned King of Ireland'. He founded the Land League, with Michael Davitt, in response to wholesale evictions of Irish tenant farmers during the Great Famine from 1845 to 1850.

They urged Irish people not to work on farms owned by English landlords and not to buy English goods. The first victim of this policy was Captain Charles Boycott who found that no one would work on his large farm in Mayo. The word 'boycott' comes from this episode in our history.

This is part of a little poem in Parnell's memory:

Anois ina chodladh faoi thalamh, Toisc gur shrois sé deireadh a shaoil. Rí i ngach rud ach ainm, Ní thagann focal anois as a bhéal.	a-nish in-a ku-la f-wee hol uv tu-isk gur hu-rish shay de-ra a heel ree i nock rudd ock a-nim nee ho-gun fu-kal a-nish oss a vale	Now asleep beneath the earth, For he's reached the end of his life. A king in all but name, No words now come from his mouth.
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The word 'lig', (to let), is used in many ways.

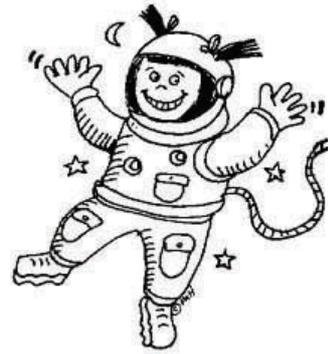
Nár lige Dia é! Lig do scíth. Ná lig amach orainne é. Lig sé air go raibh sé tinn. Ná lig ort gurb eol duit é. Ná lig síos mé. Lig chugat agus uait. B'fhearr dúinn ligean dó.	naw-er lig-a dee-a (h) ay lig du sh-kee naw lig a- mock ur-ing-a ay lig shay er gu rev shay tin naw lig urt gur-ab (h)ole dut ay naw lig she-us may lig coo-t o-gus oo-t bar do-ing lig-un doe	God forbid! Take it easy. Don't take it out on us. He pretended he was sick. Don't let on you know. Don't let me down. Give and take. We'd better leave it to him.
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As usual, we finish with a cúpla seanfhocal.

Ní féidir le duine an dá thrá a fhreastal. An rud is annamh is iontach. De réir a chéile a thógtar na caisleáin Is fearr an tsláinte ná na táinte. Aithníonn ciaróg ciaróg eile.	Nee fay-der le din-a on daw h-raw a ras-tal. On rudd iss on-ov iss een-tock. De rare a kay-la a hoge-tor na cash- law-in. Iss far on t-lawn-ta naw na tawn-ta. a-nee-on key-rogue key-rogue ella.	A person can't do two things at the one time. What's seldom seen is wonderful. Rome wasn't built in a day. Health is better than wealth. Birds of a feather flock to- gether.
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SPACE

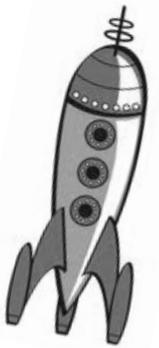
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Apollo
 Astronaut
 Black Hole
 Capsule
 Comet
 Cosmonaut
 Earth
 Galaxy
 Jupiter
 Launch

Lunar
 Mars
 Mercury
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 Space Station
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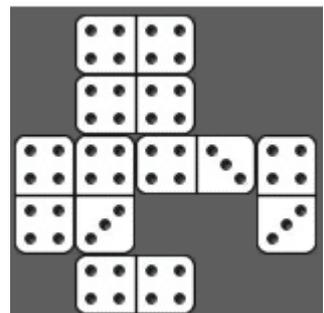
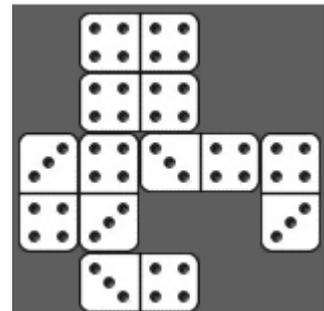


SuDoku

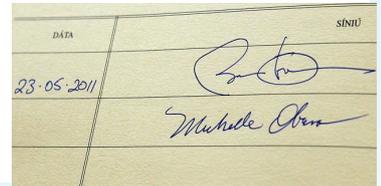
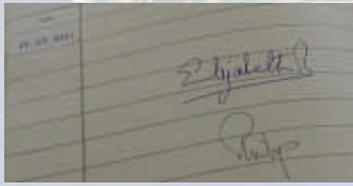
					1	9		
1		7					5	3
		4	5					
	4		8	3		6		
	6		7		4		2	
		5		6	9		3	
					2	5		
6	1					2		7
		2	6					

Each SuDoku grid has a unique solution that can be reached logically without guessing. Enter digits from 1 to 9 into the blank spaces. Every row must contain one of each digit. So must every column, as must every 3x3 square.

Spot the Differences



RECENT VISITORS



Queen Elizabeth making her speech in Dublin Castle during the State dinner.

Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh arrived in Ireland on Tuesday, 17th May. They were received in *Áras an Uachtaráin* by President Mary McAleese and her husband Martin. In the afternoon they went to the Garden of Remembrance where they both laid wreaths to commemorate those who died in pursuit of Irish freedom. On Wednesday another symbolic wreath laying ceremony took place at the Island-bridge War Memorial in memory of the soldiers killed in the First World War.



Queen Elizabeth and President Mary McAleese visit Croke Park.

The Queen also visited Government Buildings, the Guinness Storehouse, and Croke Park, where Prince Philip was presented with a hurley and sliotar. That night at a State dinner in Dublin Castle, the speeches made by the Queen and the President gave messages of friendship, and regret for past sorrows.

The Queen in her address, even used a *cúpla focail*, beginning her speech with *"A Uachtaráin agus a chairde..."* and later she sympathised with *"all those who have suffered as a consequence of our troubled past... With the benefit of ... hindsight we can all see things which we wish had been done differently, or not at all."* She referred to the close bonds which now exist between the two nations. The Queen received a rapturous applause and a standing ovation and ended her speech with a toast to the President and people of Ireland.



An Taoiseach Enda Kenny with Queen Elizabeth under a portrait of Michael Collins at Government Buildings.

On Thursday the Queen indulged her passion for horses by visiting the National Stud in Kildare and in the evening attended a 'Riverdance' concert. On Friday she visited the Rock of Cashel and her final visit was to the English Market in Cork. This was the only place she got a chance to walk about among the people, where she got a great reception.

On Monday May 23rd President Barack Obama and his wife Michelle arrived. They spent the morning meeting President Mary McAleese and An Taoiseach, Enda Kenny. Afterwards the President flew by helicopter to the village of Moneygall Co. Offaly where the President visited the home of Falmouth Kearney, his great-great-great-grandfather, and met some of his relations. He and Michelle shook hands and posed for photos with many of the 3,000 locals present.



Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip arriving by helicopter to visit the Rock of Cashel.

In the afternoon he addressed a crowd of 40,000 at College Green in Dublin. He promised *"America will stand by you always in your pursuit of peace."* He lifted the mood of the nation by his encouraging words *"...your best days are still ahead of you."* The speech ended with a hopeful message: *"Is féidir linn. Yes, we can!"* They then flew directly to London for fear volcanic ash would disrupt their scheduled flight for the next day.



Crowds line the street waiting for the presidential visit to Moneygall, Co Offaly.



Queen Elizabeth and President Mary McAleese lay wreaths in the Garden of Remembrance.



Queen Elizabeth lays a wreath at the Memorial Garden.



Fishmonger Pat O'Connell shows his wares to the Queen during a visit to the English Market in Cork on the last day of her visit.



An Taoiseach, Enda Kenny presents President Barack Obama with a hurley.



The presidential couple take to the stage in College Green in Dublin.



Barack Obama with his wife Michelle in Ollie Hayes pub in Moneygall.