RUAH ‘come to the edge, a risky place’

Teresa Homan, Hutt Valley

In June 2015 Teresa Homan went to Ireland to participate in RU A H (a Hebrew word meaning ‘Spirit’)

RUAH offers a break from daily routine and concerns. It is an opportunity to explore limits and challenge fears. This is what spiritual awakening and renewal is all about. Our daily lives are immersed in Mystery. Mystery is encountered in those moments when we feel awakened and alive. Nano and Edmund (founder of Presentation Brothers) lived in Ireland in the 18th and 19th centuries. Their stories were shaped by their experience of Mystery among the people with whom they lived. Teresa shares her experience with us.

RU AH ‘come to the edge a risky place to visit’ especially for an inexperienced traveller like myself. The most significant experience of RU AH was he tangata, he tangata, he tangata - it is the people, it is the people, it is the people. I took this journey with people from around the globe - sisters, brothers, Associates, Friends of Nano and Edmund Rice. I made 49 new friends for life.

I went to the edge and looked at the challenges I have in order to risk death so I may receive life. Margaret Silf, retreat director and author, guided us to the emergence of a new spirituality that Pope Francis is calling the Church—to radically follow Jesus. Nano Nagle and Edmund Rice saw this challenge in their time and left everything to follow their call. RU AH opened doors for me to walk in their shoes and to commit to step out over the edge. At the edge is God whose hands will hold us if we only but trust. I was reminded of the story of Jonathan Livingston seagull who flew pass the boundaries of space and time and emerged into the big sky free at last.

After a week in Galway on retreat we travelled to Callan, Waterford, Mount Sion, Ballygriffin, South Presentation convent in Cork, and Mount St Joseph. We visited Celia Griffin Memorial and prayed for her and others who suffer from the effects of poverty. I couldn’t help but think of the two year old girl who died here in New Zealand due to the damp cold house she was living in. I ask myself, ‘how far have we come really?’

Some highlights were the visit to Cork walking the streets Nano walked and seeing the little lanes she would have ventured down. The prayer ritual at her graveside and touching her coffin, the wonderful experience and prayer ritual at Killavullen Mass rock., Ballygriffin, the Blackwater River, the vast fields, the Nagle Mountains and the perfumes of the environmental project happening there. Other highlights include the dance and music of Ireland, sharing the story of Edmund Rice and the Presentation and Christian brothers and how they are making his charism relevant for today.

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Some of these experiences have taken root in me and I will discover a way to use them and ground them here at home, so watch this space! I was particular impressed by young people and their commitment to follow in some way the Nano and Edmund story. This is something I think we can engender here.

It was with great Joy I meet up with some of the Sisters who were here in New Zealand and thank them for their Presentation hospitality especially Catherine Mulcahy and Juliana Carmody who took me under their wing. Thanks also to the Presentation Sisters who made me welcome at Monastererevin and Ballygriffin.

I know that RUAH will have a lasting influence on my life and calls me to come to the edge here at home where I am in a safe space to advocate for those in need here and across the globe and those who face danger everyday for their belief in Jesus and his radical call reflected in Nano to ‘love one another as I have hitherto done’.

We need to tell the story of Nano and the Presentation Sisters as it unfolded here and to discover new ways of offering her special charism to others.

I pay tribute to all my RUAH friends and thank them for making me part of their family. I was inspired by their commitment, generosity, and courage especially those who face danger every day to bring Jesus to their part of the world - God bless you all. And finally a heartfelt thanks to the New Zealand Presentations for making the RUAH experience possible for me.

Presentation mission gala and garage sale

This event has been a major feature of the Kapiti Coast. It was started up to raise money to support NZ Presentation Sisters who began new missions in Chile, Peru and Ecuador, and in Papua New Guinea. One enduring achievement of the PNG mission has been the construction and operation of a health clinic (haus sik) in Ningil, northern PNG, staffed by four nurses supported by the Presentation Sisters. Others have been the establishment of a vibrant community of local Sisters who are now ministering to their own people.

The event was held on Saturday 24 September 2015 and raised over $NZ18000. Some of this will be used to help the Sisters in Ningil to rebuild the sisters’ house, recently burnt down and also to replace the nurses houses, which are falling down. The money will also provide for health care, school fees and pastoral work in PNG and South America.

St Patrick’s School is on the move

Established in the 1950s by the Presentation Sisters the school is being relocated and rebuilt, along with the two church buildings on the Kapiti Coast. The new site is a lot more central and accessible and should generate an increase in the school role. The school is expected to open in time for the start of the school year in 2017 and has been designed to support new systems and methods of teaching. With this relocation and parish amalgamation the school name will change from St Patrick’s school to Our Lady of Kapiti school. The history and traditions of the school will be retained and take the best of the past and use it as a foundation for the future.

We pray that following Nano Nagle’s example, may this school be a bright lantern, a beacon of light, that guides those who come in contact with it to a future full of possibilities...Lord hear us"
This photo will jog some memories!

It was taken at our first National Gathering, 21-23 November 1997. The photo is a bit faded these days and a good number have died. See how many faces you recognise. With the photo was a few notes that read: A National gathering attended by most of the PBVM Associates in NZ for an in-house weekend at Futuna. The gathering was facilitated by Marlette Black PBVM (Queensland). The group unanimously voted to form the Presentation Associates of New Zealand (PANZ). A Task Team was formed from representatives from the three geographical areas plus one Sister representative mandated to complete the few items of unfinished business and organise the next National Gathering. The gathering was initiated, planned, and funded by Associates. There was an Australian Associate present from Wagga.
Where are they now?
Mairead (Margaret) King pbvm

I arrived in New Zealand on Waitangi Day February 06 1967 (at this time it was called New Zealand Day I think).
In December 1981 I left for Chile.
While in New Zealand I lived first in Taita, then in Manaia, Taranaki and finally in Paraparaumu, in all fifteen great years.
I enjoyed my years in New Zealand and they prepared me well for the mission in Chile
Just now I am back in Ireland and do some work with a senior citizens group in inner city Dublin.

An invitation!

In February 2016 two international Presentation Teams are coming to New Zealand. The teams are members of the Nano Nagle Commission and The International Presentation Lay Movement for Mission. There will be two opportunities to meet with the groups:

South Island  Sunday February 21
St Marys Church
87 Church St, Mosgiel
2.00pm to 6.00pm.
Please RSVP to nora.c@xtra.co.nz or jlandhf@gmail.com
or leave a message at 03 489 8120

North Island  Sunday February 28
St Teresa’s Church Hall
210 St Andrews Rd, Plimmerton
1.00pm to 5.00pm.
Please RSVP to Mary-Anne 04 9024868 kindmak@clear.net.nz
or Margaret 04 2996825 m.a.bevin@gmail.com

It will be great to see all people interested in Nano Nagle. You are warmly invited to come along and bring anyone you think who may be interested. Come and hear an outline of what is happening internationally and hopes for the future, so we can be part of it in our own local areas. It is also an opportunity for us to meet with them. The afternoon will consist of prayer, input, time for reflection and time for questions. If anyone wishes to help or support in some way, some baking would be much appreciated as an afternoon tea will be an important part of the gathering when we can all mix and mingle.