



Rebuilding the walls!



Grey clouds and sheeting rain were replaced with blue sky and bright sunshine just 10 minutes before the first team members arrived for OM Ireland's first summer outreach at Lacken House.

This "mini-miracle" seemed to set the tone for Impact Ireland 2008 as we stood in awe of God's goodness day after day.

Preparations for the first major OM Ireland programme in our new home proved exciting but challenging. Long-unused rooms in the Lacken House 'stable block' had to be cleaned and transformed into meeting rooms and a dining room.

Meanwhile, in the space of a week, a container was fitted out with electricity, water and gas and equipped with kitchen fittings (scrubbed, cleaned and polished by OM Ireland team members)... Voila! Our new catering kitchen was ready for action (just in time!)

This year, OM Ireland welcomed 41 team members from the USA, Brazil, Canada, England, Ireland, Germany, Switzerland, Finland and The Netherlands.

In the beautiful surroundings of Lacken House, participants felt the presence of God. The special sense of unity which characterised this outreach was another miracle!

During the four-day preparation conference, participants received Bible teaching and practical training and spent time worshipping and praying together.

A prayer evening, based on Isaiah 61: 1 - 4 proved a highlight as teams were commissioned for the work ahead.



Team leaders symbolically built a stone wall as a picture of their work to support Irish churches in building God's kingdom in Ireland.

Following the conference, five teams headed out to serve alongside churches in the towns of Callan, Killkenny, Carlow, Tullamore and Cavan.

A sixth team on board OM Ireland's Big Red Bus supported the work in Callan and Tullamore.

Through children's holiday clubs and youth events, on the streets, in shopping centres and on housing estates, at barbecues and special events the teams took every possible opportunity to demonstrate and share the good news about Jesus in Ireland.

Read on for stories of what God did through their work...

"They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated; they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations."
Isaiah 61:4

Inside:
Stories from the teams





Transforming lives

“Thank you!”

One boy was always getting into trouble during the children’s holiday club in Tullamore. “He had several of us pulling our hair out,” shared team leader Joe from the USA, “but he kept coming and really seemed to be enjoying the club. On the last day he brought two letters (one for the boy leaders and one for the girl leaders) thanking us for taking the time to spend with them in Tullamore. It was great to see the positive impact on him.”

Another boy commented, “You all seem so happy all the time”. Joe had the chance to tell him this was because God is in their lives.

Standing room only!

Team members in Tullamore were shocked to discover they outnumbered the congregation during the first Sunday service they attended. But God was at work. On the final Sunday so many visitors turned up to church that the place was packed and it was a struggle to find enough chairs!

Living for drugs, alcohol, sex and fighting

Seeing the hopeless environment for the children and teenagers in one housing estate was a shock to Leon from The Netherlands. “The teens are living for drugs, alcohol, sex and fighting and they are influencing the little children,” Leon said.

“At the start of the week I heard one boy tell his friend, ‘If you do that again, I will kill you’, but by the end of the week he wrote me a message ‘Leon is my best friend’. I can see that already this is such a huge change!”

Please pray!

“One of the biggest things we noticed with the teenagers was how closed they were and how little love they seemed to show in their lives” commented Nick from the USA.

“Then one day I was talking with a small boy and I said I would pray for his brother who has a broken pelvis. Suddenly, one of the teenagers asked if we could pray for his mum, who has heart problems. Of course, we said we would do that!”

Touched

During the children’s club in Castlecomer, team members gradually got to know one older girl. At the end of the week, this teenager joined the team for a barbecue and listened intently as Julie, from England, shared her testimony. “She seemed really touched by what had been said and what went on,” Julie said afterwards.

Moving encounter

Shelley from Canada was moved by an encounter with a Roman Catholic man in his 80s. He came into the Presbyterian Church where the team was working. “He asked if he could walk around and take a look at the church. As he was doing that, Rob was tuning his guitar. I asked him, ‘Would you like to sing a song with us?’” After singing “Amazing Grace” with the team, the man grabbed their hands and said, “Let’s say the Lord’s Prayer together.”



Haunted

When there were more team members than children at their holiday club in Cavan, Jes felt as if she had nothing to do. Suddenly a man walked into the church, along with his small daughter.

Jumping up to talk to the new arrivals, Jes soon discovered the man had many questions. “He seemed to be hungering for God,” she explained. After talking with the man for 45 minutes, Jes arranged to meet with him again. He later told the team he had felt “compelled” to go to the church that day.

Meeting up with the man again, team member Jeremy had further opportunities to share with him about God. “He is haunted by the things he has done in the past,” Jeremy shared.

Answering questions

One team stayed with two sisters who were new believers. “They had so many questions,” said Riley Enns, from Canada. “We often stayed up to two or three in the morning talking and answering some of the questions. We know that God will continue to work.”



...and communities!



One of the ladies felt fearful. "If I do a sin today and I die, I will go to hell," she told them. Team members helped her to understand that nothing can separate us from God in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:38) and gave her a new assurance of her salvation.

On the couch!

The "Kleenex" couch proved the inspiration for the church in Carlow to set up their own couches in the city centre. With permission from the local shopping centre, two couches outside SuperQuinn soon attracted crowds of local youngsters, eager for the chance to sit and talk.

"Every day teens would flock to us - knowing we would talk about Jesus - and spend hours with us," shared one team member. "They wanted to talk about everything and their minds were 100% open to new ideas. There is a harvest field ripe for the picking and it's walking the streets of Carlow!"

Youngsters expressed their amazement that anyone would be willing to listen to their opinions and concerns. Sharing even deep problems in their lives, many were open to hearing about Jesus.

One girl who was convinced that she was too 'bad' for God heard the truth that no-one is beyond the reach of His forgiveness and love. Others shared the pain of rejection or openly discussed how boredom had led to destructive habits in their lives.

Emily from the USA summed up the experience of sharing with these young people. "I spent four hours straight on the couch talking



to teens (about 10 of them), getting to know about their lives and bringing God into the mix. AMAZING!"

God answers prayer

Arriving to run a children's club on a housing estate one afternoon, team members Lydia and Hope were greeted by a small girl who was very upset. She had taken her sisters watch and worn it without permission but now it was stuck on her wrist. After several failed attempts at removing the watch, Lydia took the little girl's wrist and prayed, "Dear God, please help the watch to open." The watch popped open on the next try.

Immediately, the little girl yelled, "God answers prayer" and kept repeating this truth throughout the day. "It was cool because I'm always throwing up prayers like that but not exactly expecting an answer," wrote Lydia afterwards. "I've also realised that my prayers really are heard when I pray for those children."

A big red miracle

Travelling from Tullamore to Callan, the Big Red Bus team noticed an unpleasant smell of diesel in the bus. Bus driver, Colm, soon realised the bus needed urgent repair-work from a qualified mechanic. Tracking down several garages in nearby Kilkenny, Colm finally chose the third garage on the list (hoping the cost of repairs would not be too high).

Within an hour the problem was fixed and the mechanic stopped to ask questions about the bus. Hearing that it was used as a venue for children's clubs, the mechanic waived the cost of the repair. As the team left, he asked, "Will you pray for me?" Colm and bus team leader, Junior, assured this man of their



My Impact Ireland...

Impact Ireland is about people; ordinary people who step out of their comfort zone because they want to tell people about their extraordinary God! Here's what they had to say about this experience...



I expected God to place me with children's ministry," wrote Anna from the USA.

"Surprisingly, He placed me on the street outreach team. I especially connected with the teenage girls. I have a wonderful group of friends and a youth group back home and I didn't realise how much I take that for granted until meeting the teens in Carlow. The youth in Ireland is losing hope. I want to be God's vessel for these people and show them that there is a God and He cares!"



Elli from Finland said, "I am speechless! Even though the week was very busy and we had some struggles, I feel how God has led us through everything. I can trust that everything is in His hands."

Pim from The Netherlands shared, "I have grown in my faith. I learned about being on a mission, being on an international team, speaking English all day, trying to trust in God all day... Sometimes that is difficult, but when you see what He is doing it is really encouraging."



"Coming to Ireland was the first time I had ever even been on a plane," explained Rob from England. "It was a bit nerve wracking. I did not know what to expect. As soon as I met my team it was as if we had known each other for years. We felt like a family. God can bind anyone together."

Guilherme from Brazil found himself feeling anxious and lonely when the team arrived in Kilkenny. He shared his struggles with the team and they prayed together. "On the Monday, things started to change for me. I really opened my heart. Now I can say, this was one of the best weeks so far this year!"



Amanda from the USA shared how God brought the team together through some difficult times. "We really bonded as a team. It really was a picture of what it means to be the body of Christ. It was amazing to have an experience like that."



"This trip changed my thoughts about evangelism. You can show God's love through so many ways. I'm thinking about being a missionary in the future," said Ilona from The Netherlands.



"Over the last six months I could not feel Jesus in my life," shared Karen from Germany. "Both of my grandmothers died and that was very hard. Today He touched me so much, I could feel His presence and I could listen to what Jesus wants me to do with my life. God has answered the questions I had."

Keep in touch! Contact us at: info@ie.om.org

