THE SECOND ORIENTATION PROGRAMME

The invitation has gone out to Brothers to consider joining the second Orientation Programme that will take place in India in April, 2017. Those who opt for this OP have the possibility of joining the second cluster in India, or going to Africa to join the already established first cluster in Western Province, Zambia. We look forward to hearing from Brothers who wish to participate in the second OP.

The experience of setting up the first Cluster in Zambia has led us to establish a longer, more extensive preparation time in 2017 in India. There is a new two-month Advanced Skills Training session following the Orientation Programme. This will include skills training in community engagement, project management and basic financial management. These are the core skills we consider necessary for Brothers to work effectively in a collaborative way in marginalized locations.

IMMERSION RETREAT

Monday morning, 9th May saw Ruvan, Sunil and Declan set off for the Home Based Care (HBC) centre in the middle of Ngombe compound in Lusaka. There they met Rodea and the team of care-givers for that day. Meanwhile David, Donal and Francis went to St Joseph’s church, Kamanga with Maggie, one of the HBC co-ordinators. At the church they met the five care-givers all residents of Kamanga compound.

Each of us went with a care-giver to visit the sick in their homes. Some of us felt uncomfortable to start with and worried as to whether we would be asked for money. “What are you?” someone was asked. “Why are you here?”

What do we say? We were bringing no gifts, nothing but ourselves.

Each evening we gathered back at

The care-givers with Donal and David
our house to share on the day with the help of Fr Dave Larkin, a Kiltegan priest. These were most moving and rich times of sharing.

On the final evening we had our own celebration of Eucharist. We remembered Edmund and how he was inspired by women in his life to dare to dream of change for the poor of Waterford. We gave thanks for the great women who had walked with us during the week.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

From 16-26 May the TST met at the Sisters of Charity house in Roma, Lusaka for a two-week community-building and planning session facilitated by Br Michael Burke.

An interesting exercise Michael invited us to do was to reflect on the Five languages of Love as designed by Gary Chapman. Each one of us were invited to share which of the five languages we preferred:

- Words of affirmation
- Acts of service
- Receiving gifts
- Quality time
- Touch

As we shared our results, we saw that words of affirmation figured highly on our list. This exercise could be very useful for any community as it seeks to become more intimate and cohesive.

Another exercise he offered was the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator for the group. After aggregating our individual profiles, we arrived at our group profile, which was a great tool to reflect how the six of us worked together in the team. It highlighted the strengths of the individual members within the group, and emphasized how we needed the gifts of each other to achieve our team goals.

Overall, our time with Michael was most fruitful, and we were most impressed with how Michael led us for the days together. We are happy that he is returning to work with us in July.

TST PLANNING
The main items on the agenda for this planning session were the operational plans for 2016 and 2017. This type of planning requires a level of detail that is very challenging. Many hours of close work have gone into the planning, and we are now confident that the plan will help us manage effectively the complexities of running TST, and establishing the new communities.

We also spent time working with members of PKF, our new firm of accountants. They were very clear in outlining a new system of accounting. We also discussed our present funding situation with its inevitable complexity arising from multiple funding sources. We work closely with the Congregation’s Mission Sustainability Working Party who advise and assist in the sourcing of funds from within the Congregation and beyond.

**THE LOCATION OF THE SECOND CLUSTER**

At a recent Skype meeting with the Indian PLT we discussed the possible locations for the second Cluster. The PLT and the TST came to a unanimous decision that the States of Assam and Meghalaya were best suited for the five new communities. The decision was made after exploring the reports that the location search group had submitted to the TST and the PLT. We want to express our thanks to the Location search team (Griban D’silva, John Pereira, Maurice Fernandes, Lurshai Nongsiang, Ryan Fernandes and William D’souza) who gave of their time to visit the various possible locations.

Now, further research by the Indian Social Institute, New Delhi, will take place in Assam and Meghalaya before exploring where the actual community sites will be located.
Western Province. Reading the various reports from the mission communities, it is heartening that the Brothers are making a real effort to connect with the local people, and beginning to listen carefully to their hopes and aspirations.

**SUPPORTING THE NEW COMMUNITIES**

Ruvan Rebello spent two days with each of the three mission communities to explain the practice and theory of community engagement. He offered the communities a plan for their future engagement with the people of the locality. If you want to get an idea of what “Community Engagement” is all about we recommend reading the latest TST Reflection article on community engagement. It can be downloaded from the OWITF website: www.ourwayintothefuture.org.

Meanwhile, Donal and David, in partnership with members of the Hub community, Joe, Michael, Mouvin and Sammy, regularly visit the communities, to support their community living.

**THE ZAMBIA CLUSTER NEWSLETTER**

We congratulate Sammy and the members of the Hub Community on the publication of the first newsletter from

GAIL WORCELO WORSHOP

On Saturday, 21 May some of us attended a workshop on New Cosmology by Sr. Gail Worcelo (organised by the Zambian Association of Religious). She challenged us to re-imagine Religious life into the future, and shared with us insights she received from her mentor Thomas Berry. This workshop was attended by over sixty people, mostly Sisters with a very good attendance from our novices and formators from the ISC community in Lusaka.
Our Way into the Future means for all Brothers. It was truly a time of growth in the awareness of Congregation, called for at the Chapter. It was also a time of sharing brotherhood through being honest with each other and enjoying each other’s company.

**TST AT THE CLG MEETING**

In early June, Francis and Declan went to Rome to join the Congregation Leadership Group (CLG) at their annual two-week meeting. The CLG consists of the Leader and Deputy Leader from the Provinces and Region of the Congregation, together with the Congregation Leadership Team and the Congregation Executive Director of Resources and Planning.

This was an ideal moment for the CLG to hear how the TST project: *Journeying Together* was progressing. The TST shared honestly the challenges of working on the project, as well as the progress made in the setting up of four new communities in western Zambia. This led the whole group into an in-depth reflection and discussion on what

**CHECK-INS FOR BROTHERS’ COMMUNITIES**

David has published a collection of a hundred check-ins called “Check-in with your Soul” that will be a very valuable resource for communities that want to have a gathering to share on how their week has gone. Each check-in begins with a reflective passage and then has a series of questions for sharing. It is available on amazon.co.uk or amazon.com.