

PRESENTATION SISTERS IRELAND

Plan for Ministry 2007–2012



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For every tree felled, at least one tree is planted, thereby renewing natural resources.

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foreword



We are pleased to present this Plan for Presentation Ministry 2007-2012.

This plan sets out the key areas for our ministry in Ireland. The plan has been developed in response to the commitments made at the Congregation Gathering 2006.

There are critical challenges for us as a congregation in Ireland regarding sustainability of ministry into the future and the need to be focused in our use of resources.

This plan belongs to all of us. Our challenge is to make it happen. We want this Plan to be translated into action, to make a difference to the people with whom we work, and contribute to the care of the planet entrusted to us.

It is important that we read it, reflect on it, discuss it and help to implement it and most importantly to hold it in our prayers.

Each community, locality and ministry is different. We ask that people allow the vision and values to influence their work in ways that are appropriate to their own particular situation.

We also ask individuals and communities to be open to being involved in new challenges and new ways of engaging in ministry in the 21st century.

We congratulate all who contributed to the development of this plan - in particular the Presentation Centre team who were commissioned to draft it.

Sr Mary Hoare
Provincial Leader (SW)

Sr Elizabeth Maxwell
Provincial Leader (N)

Sr Claude Meagher
Provincial Leader (SE)

preface

This Plan was developed at the request of the three Irish Presentation Leadership Teams. It grew out of an extensive process of reflection and consultation from which the following emerged:

- The urgent need for a new consciousness of our inter-connectedness and interdependence, in an increasingly globalised society in which wealth and poverty, starvation and excess, power and powerlessness co-exist amidst fractured relationships on a fragile planet;
- The firm belief, based on the experience of Presentation Sisters and co-workers worldwide, that the Gospel as lived out by Nano Nagle in her time, can continue to inspire efforts to forge this new consciousness of human solidarity and responsibility for one another and our planet;
- The conviction that the first Strategic Plan (2002-2006) should be built upon;
- The need for the new Plan to be inclusive of all Presentation ministries in Ireland;
- The need to encourage innovation in ministry in response to urgent and unmet needs at a systemic level;
- The need for a supportive and empowering structure to implement the plan.

Arising from this reflection and consultation the Strategic Plan for Presentation Ministry 2007–2012 will focus on the following areas:

- spirituality and faith development
- learning and innovation
- social inclusion and outreach
- human rights and justice
- ecology and sustainable living.

Underlying and binding all these aims together is a spirituality of being in communion.


The work of drafting this plan was itself an experience of being in communion with the hundreds of people who, through their passion for the possible, have contributed to the plan in the consultation process. We thank them sincerely. We thank especially the three Presentation Leadership Teams. Their foresight, unstinting support and ongoing involvement in the drafting process have made this Plan possible. We also remember with gratitude all who contributed directly or indirectly to the first Strategic Plan without which, in all probability, the present Plan could not come to light.


As we present this new Plan, it is our sincere desire that the partnerships and networks which have grown over many years and which have contributed to the development of the Plan and to several innovative projects will continue to grow. Yet we are aware that, in the words of Archbishop Oscar Romero:

*We cannot do everything and there is a sense of liberation in realising that.
This enables us to do something and do it very well.*

*It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning a step along the way
an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest.*

... We are prophets of a future not our own.


Sr Nano Brennan
Chairperson, Presentation Centre


David Rose
Director, Presentation Centre



the purpose and intent of this plan

This document presents the Strategic Plan for Ministry of the Presentation Sisters and co-workers from 2007 to 2012. The purpose of this Plan is to give direction to our ministry.

While we are involved in a wide range of activities and ministries, this plan aims to identify the key areas for development in to the future. The plan revolves around the call to a new consciousness of how people and the cosmos are interconnected. It is driven by the need to respect the delicate web of relationships supporting this interdependence.

This plan attempts to address some of the root causes that lead to the exclusion and marginalisation of people in our world and to the destruction of our planet. Priority is given to work that responds in new and radical ways to unmet social, educational and spiritual needs. This work is in keeping with the Congregational Gathering 2006 commitments.

The Plan also aims to build the capacity of the Congregation to be a critical voice in challenging unjust and damaging social and ecological systems. We will do this through research, policy and advocacy and through providing alternative models that point towards a transforming vision of society.

key understandings & assumptions

In drafting the plan the following understandings and assumptions were arrived at:

This plan

- is inspired by a spirituality based on the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the example of Nano Nagle and articulated by the Congregational Gathering 2006. It calls for a spirituality of 'being in communion';
- is informed by consultation with sisters and co-workers;
- is inclusive of the main ministry areas of the Presentation Congregation in Ireland and of the wide variety of ways of being involved in these ministries;
- builds on and updates the previous strategic plan, 2002-2006 and seeks to further address sustainability and development of Presentation ministry in Ireland;
- assumes that long-term sustainability and development is best addressed through a single all Ireland model of governance and decision making, especially in relation to structures and resources;
- requires an operational programme that clarifies roles and responsibilities in relation to particular aims;
- acknowledges that collaboration and networking with persons and groups with similar aims is essential for successful implementation.

plan outline

The Plan is organised as follows:

who we are:

telling the origin and identity of the Congregation.

spirituality and values:

informing the life and work of the members of the Congregation and associated co-workers and colleagues and drawing on the directions set by the Congregational Gathering 2006.

external environment:

situating the plan in contemporary Ireland and outlining key trends relevant to our mission.

internal environment:

outlining the critical challenges to be faced within the Congregation.

mission statement:

defining the mission of the Congregation in Ireland today.

aims and objectives:

containing the six aims with specific objectives to be met over the five year life of the plan.

implementation:

imagining the future and outlining how the aims and objectives will be achieved.

milestones:

setting out the challenges, and marking the achievements

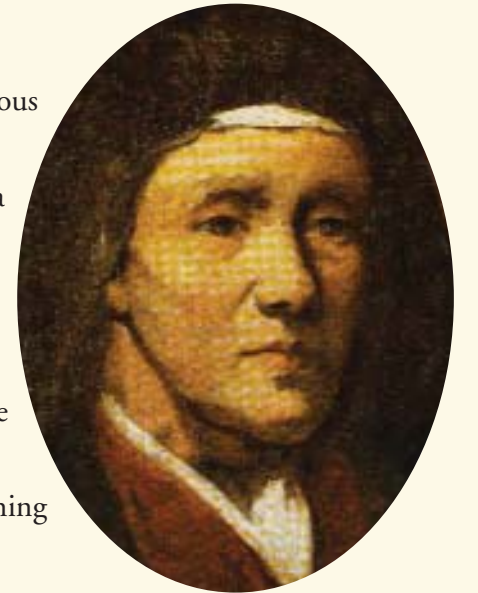
who we are

The Presentation Sisters in Ireland are part of a worldwide religious congregation which was founded in 1775 by Nano Nagle in Cork.

Nano Nagle was motivated by a deep rooted faith in Jesus Christ, a faith that seeks justice.

At great risk to herself, she set up seven schools to provide education for the poor, during the penal times. She defied the established colonial system of that time, and through the provision of education challenged the institutional injustice that kept people poor.

Hers was a new and radical response that would have far reaching consequences for Irish society.



Our spirituality and values

We believe spirituality encompasses the whole of human experience. It is the human spirit fully engaged. This plan has evolved out of that spirituality – the values, beliefs and shared experience of the followers of Nano Nagle.

Like Nano, Presentation Sisters, co-workers and colleagues draw their inspiration from the Gospel of Jesus Christ, whose mission was to bring good news to the poor.

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has chosen me to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives

and recovery of sight to the blind;
to set free the oppressed
and announce that the time has come
when the Lord will save his people”.

(Luke 4:18)



Jesus’ life and ministry centred on proclaiming the good news of the ‘kingdom of God’. This is a liberating message that God loves us and calls us to a transforming vision of society – a true human community built on the values of equality, justice, compassion and care for the ‘other’ and all of creation. This is the vision at the heart of this plan.

We hope and work for a world where communities can be fully human and fully alive in harmony with each other and with nature. As the commitments made at the worldwide Congregational Gathering of Presentation Sisters 2006 state:

“Aware that ‘we stand at a critical moment in Earth’s history’ (Earth Charter), we encourage one another to respond wholeheartedly in the spirit of Nano Nagle to the following:

- A spirituality of being in communion that seeks God in the inter-connectedness of the whole of creation and empowers active love for self, others and all of nature ...
- Critical reflection on the use of power ... to change unjust systems ...
- Moving towards ways of living that enable social justice and sustainability ...
- Being in community with people made poor ...
- Moving towards new expressions of global solidarity in mission ...”

We believe that it is only in dialogue and collaboration with people of all faiths and all people of goodwill that we can fully realise these commitments.

the external environment

Many social and economic trends in the rapidly changing Ireland of today are relevant to the aims of the plan. These trends represent both challenges and opportunities to advance our mission and work. They offer a perspective to ground the plan in present reality. They also point to future challenges. The trends are complex and interlinked. The following are snapshots of these trends:

Spirituality and the search for meaning

There is a search for meaning, authenticity and happiness in the midst of a consumer driven lifestyle. This lifestyle is built on the belief that ‘I buy therefore I am’. Evidence of the hunger and search for meaning can be found in the ever expanding number of titles on self-help and well-being appearing in our bookshops.

Spirituality encompasses the depth of the human person in community. It is about intellectual, emotional and relational well-being. It is the desire and yearning for something more beyond oneself. As a faith based organisation, we are challenged to articulate and live a spirituality of communion that is simple, sustainable and impels us to act justly.

A multi-ethnic society



The past ten years have witnessed the end of involuntary emigration and the transformation of Irish society by the arrival of significant numbers of new migrants from the EU and beyond.

They bring valuable skills to our economy and a richness and diversity to our society. Presentation schools and centres of ministry are engaged in welcoming newcomers, celebrating their cultures and helping them adjust to life in Ireland. We are greatly enriched by these new arrivals. The challenge for all of us is to build an open vibrant and tolerant society.

Globalisation

Globalisation is one of the reasons we have a multicultural society. Globalisation can be described as the movement of people, information, finance and goods across borders. While Ireland benefits from immigration, the majority 'Two-Thirds' world is experiencing a 'brain drain' of its brightest people as they move from southern to northern hemispheres in search of a better way of life.

There are profound inequalities in the globalisation process. Trade policy loaded against poorer producers favours the richer countries. The Congregational Gathering 2006 challenged us, as a transnational organisation, to develop new expressions of global solidarity.



Environmental sustainability



Global warming is perhaps the most serious and urgent threat facing humanity. Yet we remain stubbornly slow to change personal, social and economic behaviours which contribute to the rise in the Earth's temperature.

The current model of economic development is simply unsustainable. A rise in the Earth's temperature by 2 degrees Celsius will see rising sea levels, extinction of up to 40% of the world's species, and extreme weather patterns leading to economic depression. Ireland is set to miss its Kyoto target for emissions for 2010.

There was a clear imperative from the Congregational Gathering for a new awareness of the balance of cosmic relationships. The challenge for the Congregation is to grow as an organisation which models simple and sustainable ways of living.

Learning and education

In the 21st century the nature of learning is rapidly changing. A shift in thinking and understanding about learning is occurring – from learning as scientific expertise, knowing the facts, and providing content – to learning as helping people define their own possibilities and solutions. The learner is no longer a passive recipient but an active participant.

New digital technology and the internet offer the potential for anyone to learn in any place, at any time.

As a congregation with a long history of educational provision we know that education is a key enabler in overcoming social and economic disadvantage. Education is a human right and the means for realising and accessing other rights. Yet, a significant number in our society do not benefit from the education system.

The challenge for a Congregation which has invested so much in education is to move to the leading edge of this new approach to learning, to be a pioneer as it was at the beginning of the 19th and 20th centuries. And to do so with those who have not benefited and are not benefiting from the education system at present.

Poverty and prosperity

We live in a prosperous Ireland with a vibrant open economy. Full employment has created a route out of poverty for many. There are almost 2 million people today in paid employment.

However, not everyone is able to take up a job. Certain groups such as pensioners, lone parents, carers, people with disabilities, those with low educational attainment, ex-offenders, those who are homeless and members of specific groups, like Travellers, the Roma and some migrants remain vulnerable. Recent statistics show that almost one person in five is at risk of poverty in Ireland. The challenge for the Congregation is to build on the first hand experience of working with communities at risk of poverty, in ways which contribute to the poverty-proofing of public policy.



the internal environment

The Congregation is over 230 years in existence and has adapted and spread to many countries throughout the world. It has a rich tradition of involvement in education. This history and experience of rootedness in local communities generates goodwill or 'social capital'. This can be built on in developing new initiatives. Living and working with communities who experience disadvantage gives us access to first hand experience to inform policy making.

The nature of the Congregation in Ireland, with its rich and diverse range of ministries, is both a strength and a challenge. The strength is that its work spans the community and voluntary sector, the education sector, social services, and the Church. This gives us the opportunity to work with and learn from many groups. The challenge for us is that being spread so widely can lead to lack of focus.

The level of involvement and investment in ministries varies from Presentation ownership and management of particular centres and initiatives to providing personnel and funding to other organisations.

The age profile of our membership is both an opportunity and a challenge. Age brings the wisdom of lived experience to ministry and service. Many sisters who have retired from formal positions continue to work on a voluntary basis with local community organisations and bring considerable skills to these roles.

The older members within Presentation communities in Ireland live a lifelong commitment to loving God and neighbour and constitute the living memory of the congregation. Each sister represents and reflects a journey of communion with people and families over generations in many parts of the world. Our older sisters offer a rich source of encouragement and belief in the goodness of people. In serenity and wisdom they are an oasis of calm and joy and embody the human values of patience, adaptability in the face of change, and acceptance in embracing the ageing process.

Ageing also represents a challenge to the future of ministry. The corporate age of the congregation means that the number of initiatives in which we are involved cannot be sustained. The need to be focused and strategic in what the congregation can do in the coming years is becoming even more acute.

This situation calls for a planned, co-ordinated and coherent development of ministry at an all-Ireland level with a matching plan for resources including personnel, finance and buildings. This will require a shift in approach from provincial to interprovincial ways of planning for ministry by Leadership Teams.

There has been significant movement towards an all-Ireland structure with the establishment of the Presentation Centre for Policy and Systemic Change (1999), the Nagle Community (1999) and the first plan for Ministry (2002–2006).

The challenge for Leadership Teams is to put in place the most effective structure for governance, management and funding. This will enable new initiatives to develop while, at the same time, supporting and, in some instances, reducing current initiatives.

Communicating the need for structural change is vital to the success of this plan. We need to engage in creative conversation and consultation on the future direction of the congregation and the best kind of structure to support people in ministry.



Overview of current ministries

Presentation ministry currently finds expression in many different ways. Today, sisters and lay colleagues are involved in a wide range of ministries and initiatives which can be grouped under the following headings:

EDUCATION AND LEARNING

Teaching, pastoral care, management and trusteeship in first and second-level schools and third-level institutions, alternative learning projects, adult, family and community education, Traveller education, and special needs education among others.

In the early 2000s the Presentation Sisters invited others to join with them in forming an Educational Trust to carry the ownership of the voluntary secondary schools into the future. CEIST (Catholic Education an Irish Schools Trust) came into being at the end of May 2007.

SOCIAL INCLUSION

Work with asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants, Travellers and homeless people, community development, family support, social finance, living and working in disadvantaged communities, health care, prison chaplaincy and aftercare, social policy, advocacy and systemic change work.



HUMAN RIGHTS AND ECOLOGY

Human rights and social justice, care of the earth, development education, missionary and community development work overseas.

SPIRITUALITY AND FAITH DEVELOPMENT

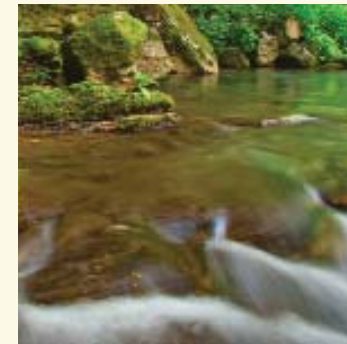
Faith formation and chaplaincy in schools, colleges, prisons and hospitals, retreat work, adult spiritual accompaniment, counselling, parish work and diocesan initiatives.

RESEARCH AND POLICY

Piloting new learning initiatives, evaluation, research on social exclusion, public policy work and submissions to government.

CARE AND SUPPORT

Caring for and supporting all members of the Congregation, running leadership and administrative offices, which provide support for ministry. A vital source of support and inspiration is the prayer, interest and encouragement of individual sisters and communities in their many locations across the country.



mission statement

In a world where there is joy and hope, great beauty, abundance and creativity but also hunger and destitution, social exclusion, destruction of our planet, inequality between 'One-Third' and 'Two-Thirds' world and a crisis of values and meaning and ...

Inspired by the Spirit which shaped the mission of Jesus and the work of Nano Nagle...

Our Mission is to promote a more compassionate, just and sustainable world.

This mission is influenced by the two powerful forces, which have formed and sustained Presentation commitment since its foundation:

- The spirit-filled mission of Jesus (Luke 4:18)
- Education, which for Nano Nagle was a way of bringing about personal and social transformation.

'COMPASSIONATE'

Our mission and work are energised by a spirituality of being in communion that seeks God in an interconnected world and empowers active love for self, others and all of nature.

'JUST'

We work to change unjust systems at local, national and international levels. We commit to being with people made poor and finding new ways to be in global solidarity.

'SUSTAINABLE'

Aware of our inter-dependence on each other and the planet, we promote ways of living that are simple and environmentally friendly.

WHAT WILL BE DISTINCTIVE ABOUT OUR APPROACH TO OUR MISSION AND MINISTRY?

The overarching thrust of our work is education and learning which awakens in us a desire to assume responsibility for one another, the greater community of life and for future generations.

Working for a more compassionate, just and sustainable world requires awareness and openness to learning new ways of being and acting. Education continues to be essential in the approach to our work across all of the aims of this plan whether in the provision of learning opportunities, promoting new understandings in learning, involving people in decisions that affect their lives, awareness raising on human rights and ecology, or awareness of the faith and spirituality dimensions to our lives.

the aims of the plan

The aims of the plan are all interlinked. Each aim contains objectives or steps as follows:

- Objectives for current initiatives
- Objectives for new initiatives aimed at promoting systemic change
- Objectives for influencing policy
- Objectives for changing ourselves as congregation.

It is envisaged that the objectives under each aim would be expressed through a particular ministry initiative or through campaigning or policy influencing work.

Aim 6 concerns the implementation of the plan.



SPIRITUALITY AND FAITH DEVELOPMENT



“We commit ourselves to a spirituality of being in communion that seeks God in the inter-connectedness of the whole of creation and empowers active love for self, others and all of nature.”

“Accept the invitation to ‘be still’ and ‘move beyond’”

(Congregational Gathering 2006)

spirituality & faith development

Aim 1: To deepen an understanding of and a commitment to live a spirituality of being in communion that seeks God in the interconnectedness of all of life and nurtures a longing to create a more compassionate, just and sustainable world.

In pursuit of this aim the Presentation congregation in partnership with other organisations and networks will work towards the following objectives:

For current ministries

- 1.1 Each sister, co-worker and colleague is asked to reflect and act on the calls from the Congregational Gathering 2006.
- 1.2 Provide opportunities, time and quiet spaces, to journey with those seeking meaning and direction in their lives, particularly in times of crisis.
- 1.3 Further develop the potential of 'sacred' places, especially those that are associated with the Presentation story or with the spiritual quest, for an in-depth encounter with the wonder, the mystery and the fragility of our shared humanity and cosmos.
- 1.4 Develop the use of religious ritual to nurture a sense of being in communion with all of created life.
- 1.5 Provide opportunities to deepen the understanding of the Eucharist and the call to be a Eucharistic people.
- 1.6 Support each other to continue in life long ministry, being in communion and conversation with people, offering time and welcome to people, aware and praying for the needs of society and the world.

For new initiatives aimed at promoting systemic change

- 1.7 Commit ourselves to theological reflection in relation to the issues raised under the aims of this plan.
- 1.8 Develop a support network at an all-Ireland level among those involved in Presentation initiatives related to spirituality, faith development, pastoral care and counselling.
- 1.9 Initiate a structured conversation around different responses to the search for meaning in human existence (a) within the Catholic Church, with special reference to the role of the laity and women in particular (b) with those who share our values but belong to a different faith community and (c) with those who no longer see themselves affiliated to a particular faith community.
- 1.10 Arising from these conversations: (1.7 & 1.8 & 1.9)
 - Review current commitments and initiatives.
 - Consult about the best way forward in the light of needs, Congregational direction, resources and sustainability.
 - Make decisions at the appropriate level.

For organisational change and development

- 1.11 The core value in this aim is the essential unity of spirituality, faith and the commitment to working for 'a more compassionate, just and sustainable world'. We will strive to grow as an organisation which lives and promotes this integral connection.

LEARNING AND INNOVATION



“This spirituality of being in communion affirms the need for: ... a critical questioning of the systems in which we live and work... We network with others in confronting unjust systems...”

(Congregational Gathering 2006)

“Our apostolate through education is vital to our mission. It involves the total community in a collaborative process through which dependency is gradually replaced by responsibility for self, society and the world.”

(Presentation Constitutions 13)

learning and innovation

Aim 2: To combat educational disadvantage through developing specific innovative approaches to learning.

In pursuit of this aim the Presentation Congregation, in partnership with other organisations and networks, will work towards the following objectives:

For current ministries

- 2.1 Review and identify sustainable Presentation initiatives and centres that are focused on learning opportunities for those who are not benefiting from the education system.
- 2.2 Recognise and maximise the opportunities to combat educational disadvantage offered by Presentation involvement in formal education.

For new initiatives aimed at promoting systemic change

- 2.3 Pilot and mainstream a three-year national initiative in on-line learning for young people as a means to combat educational disadvantage and to contribute to new ways of learning.
- 2.4 Develop an innovative learning programme for the proposed ministry initiative in South Presentation, Cork which will promote local and global solidarity.

For influencing policy

- 2.5 Publish a report on the learning pilots (2002–2006) in order to disseminate the findings on intergenerational learning, as a way to contribute to best practice in early childhood care and education.
- 2.6 Learn policy lessons, based on the above initiatives, in order to engage in influencing education policy in favour of those who have not benefited from the system to the same extent as others by identifying three key areas where change is needed.
- 2.7 Draw lessons from the on-line learning initiative with a view to influencing good practice and policy-making in this area.

For organisational change and development

- 2.8 The core value in this aim is learning. We will become a learning organisation, through commitment to reflective practice and review in all of our ministries and initiatives.

SOCIAL INCLUSION AND OUTREACH



“We commit ourselves to ... being in community with people made poor. An on-going search for more participative ways of living ... Ensure that future initiatives are in the service of people made poor.”

(Congregational Gathering 2006)

“We challenge values, systems and structures that perpetuate poverty and injustice and ... stand with people in their struggle.”

(Presentation Constitution 14)

“Recall the face of the poorest and weakest people whom you may have seen and ask yourself if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to them.”

(Talisman of Gandhi)

social inclusion and outreach

Aim 3: To promote social inclusion through outreach, participation and influencing public policy.

In pursuit of this aim the Presentation Congregation, in partnership with other organisations and networks, will work towards the following objectives:

For current ministries

- 3.1 Continue to live in communities and support initiatives, centres and schools in areas where life is a struggle; work, in particular with Travellers, prisoners, ex-offenders, migrants and refugees, the homeless and with local communities experiencing exclusion.
- 3.2 Evaluate our capacity to sustain the level of current initiatives and make the consequent provisions for future work.

For new initiatives aimed at promoting systemic change

- 3.3 Develop a community-based response to domestic violence with one specific community group.
- 3.4 Support an initiative that promotes the inclusion and rights of marginalised migrants and refugees in Ireland, building on Presentation links with countries of origin.
- 3.5 Re-develop South Presentation using inclusive processes so that the people who use it can shape the development and design the services provided, in ways that meet their needs.

For influencing policy

- 3.6 Engage with social policy makers, in Ireland, the EU and globally, drawing on our experience of working with communities experiencing exclusion and ensure that their voice is heard.
- 3.7 Devise processes to allow the voice of those experiencing exclusion to be heard in policy areas that affect them.
- 3.8 Publish a report on the outreach pilots and disseminate the learning in order to promote policy and further develop practice on outreach, to increase participation of the most excluded.

For organisational change and development

- 3.9 The core value in this aim is inclusion. We will integrate inclusive ways of working in all of the aims of this plan, and become a more inclusive organisation, through meaningful and appropriate participation of the people with whom we work, in our decision-making processes.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND JUSTICE



“Confronted with ‘our responsibility to one another, to the greater community of life and to future generations’ (Earth Charter), disturbed by the divisions of our two-thirds/one-third world and by the destruction of the planet, we commit ourselves to ... changing unjust systems at local, national and international levels ... move towards new expressions of global solidarity in mission.”

(Congregational Gathering 2006)

human rights and justice

Aim 4: To promote human rights by raising awareness and taking action on global development issues.

In pursuit of this aim the Presentation congregation in partnership with other organisations and networks will work towards the following objectives:

For current ministries

- 4.1 Campaign for change in systems and structures which perpetuate poverty, particularly in relation to trade and debt.
- 4.2 Identify and build on existing Presentation development education initiatives between the ‘One-Third’ and ‘Two-Thirds’ world.
- 4.3 Develop a strategy to increase the number of people currently involved in campaigning on issues identified under this aim.
- 4.4 Build the capacity of the Presentation All-Ireland Justice Commission.

For new initiatives aimed at promoting systemic change

- 4.5 Identify new expressions of ‘global solidarity’ called for by the Congregational Gathering and model one of these expressions. This could be part of the South Presentation re-development.

For influencing policy

- 4.6 Contribute to national and international human rights policymaking through engagement with like-minded networks and in particular the International Presentation Association (IPA).
- 4.7 Contribute to building the capacity of the International Presentation Association (IPA) and the campaigning potential of the Congregation.

For organisational change and development

- 4.8 The core value in this aim is human dignity protected by rights. We will become an organisation which lives out our belief in the dignity of each person by our commitment to the protection of rights.

ECOLOGY AND SUSTAINABLE LIVING



“We stand at a critical moment in Earth’s history...”

(Earth Charter)

“... a spirituality of communion ... draws us to reverence and nurture the Cosmos, Earth and its peoples, particularly those most wounded.

We commit ourselves to ... move towards ways of living that enable social justice and sustainability”

(Congregational Gathering 2006)

ecology and sustainable living

Aim 5: To promote awareness of and take action on environmental issues and sustainable development

In pursuit of this aim the Presentation Congregation, in partnership with other organisations and networks, will work towards the following objectives:

For current ministries

- 5.1 Develop a focused approach to the adoption and use of environmentally friendly and sustainable practices within Presentation and other community groups.
- 5.2 Collaborate with the Nano Nagle Centre, Ballygriffin, as a centre focused on ecology and care of the earth, in promoting environmental sustainability.

For new initiatives aimed at promoting systemic change

- 5.3 Contribute to the development of a ‘green towns’ movement by building on the experience of the Mountmellick Race Against Waste project.

For influencing policy

- 5.4 Identify two key strategies to influence environmental policy locally, nationally and internationally on sustainable use of resources.

For organisational change and development

- 5.5 The core value in this aim is care for creation. We will become an organisation that, by our practices, will truly recognise the interdependence of all of life and live in a manner that promotes sustainability.

IMPLEMENTATION AND ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE



“Flowing from our Presentation identity we ‘channel our resources so that we can speak and act in partnership with others for global justice’.”

*(IPA Mission Statement cited in
Congregational Gathering 2006)*

“Mobilise our resources to where the needs are greatest”

(Congregational Gathering 2006.)

“... continue to engage in participative evaluation of ... current structures and where necessary move towards new/more appropriate ones.”

(General Chapter 1996.)

implementation and organisation change

Aim 6: To develop the capacity of the congregation to implement this plan.

In pursuit of this aim the Presentation Leadership in Ireland, through a process of dialogue, will take steps to ensure that:

- 6.1 This Plan is central and integral to the decision-making processes on policy and planning for ministry at all levels in the congregation in Ireland.
- 6.2 A communications strategy (internal and external) is developed to raise awareness of the issues being addressed by the Plan, to generate debate on the issues, and to inform and influence policy-makers.
- 6.3 Ownership of the plan by sisters and colleagues is encouraged, recognising the variety of gifts and abilities that each person can bring to its implementation.
- 6.4 The process of an all-Ireland way of working is advanced through establishing the most effective structure for governance, management and funding for all ministry development, in line with this plan.

- 6.5 The Congregation's capacity for sustainability of the range of current ministries and centres into the future is addressed.
- 6.6 An operational programme is developed to identify responsibilities, outcomes, indicators, and timeframes in relation to the implementation of the Plan's objectives.
- 6.7 The Plan is adequately resourced by the re-allocation of funds, personnel and buildings to ministries consistent with the aims of the Plan.
- 6.8 The Plan is monitored, reviewed and evaluated.

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN



Imagining the future

This plan points to a dynamic vision of what Presentation ministry will look like in the future. By 2012, Presentation Sisters and colleagues will, in partnership with like-minded groups, have made significant contributions to policy and practice in the areas of learning innovation, social inclusion, human rights, ecology and spirituality.

In ten years time, our work will mainly involve pioneering new approaches in learning to combat educational disadvantage and working with local communities in community education. We will have had an influence on how social and educational services are delivered and on how policy is made. We will be engaged in research, social policy and advocacy work.

We will have developed new initiatives in relation to spirituality. We will be known as people who enable the human spirit to be fully alive and engaged in the critical issues that face our society and planet.

We will have increased awareness on human rights, development education and ecological issues. We will have campaigned on global warming and sustainable development.

Our work will be characterised by a twin-track approach: practical service provision and policy influencing for systemic change.

We will continue to build on a new range of working relationships and partnerships with like-minded NGOs, government departments, the business sector and the media.

The following sections detail how we intend to make this vision of the future a reality.

We want to make a difference

We want this Plan to be translated into action. We want it to make a difference to people who experience exclusion, to those searching for meaning and to this fragile planet entrusted to our care.

Despite the decline of Presentation Sisters in Ireland in terms of personnel, institutions and resources we are encouraged to initiate a new plan by:

- Our reflections on the way Nano Nagle, with meagre resources, translated her vision into practice and the way in which Presentation people, for over 230 years in every continent in the world, have given practical and relevant expression to that vision.
- The congruence between the updating of the Plan and the International Congregational Gathering 2006, which identified the direction of the congregation for the next six years.
- The partnerships and networks which have grown over many years all over Ireland and those which, more recently, have contributed significantly to the solid and innovative projects which Presentation Centre is currently developing.
- The consultations with and feed-back from so many people about the plan and the good will, interest and expectation evoked by this process.

How can we best organise ourselves so that we do make a difference?

The structure and processes developed to promote and implement the plan need to:

- Demonstrate that the plan is inclusive of all ministry.
- Advance and deepen the all-Ireland way of working.
- Further develop the links and partnerships with groups, agencies and individuals which have grown over the years especially through the operation of the first Strategic Plan 2002-2006
- Enable sustainability of mission and ministry into the future.
- Deliver coherent planning in line with the plan.
- Devolve decision making.

- Be capable of accessing funding outside of the congregation.
- Enable fidelity to the plan during the transition from one term of office for Provincial Teams to the next.
- Enable the evolution of a structure, which addresses the sustainability of Presentation mission and ministry in the context of the decline of Congregational personnel and resources.
- Support those in ministry by the provision of professional development and training.

What are the challenges in implementing this plan now?

- The plan is an-All Ireland development plan but at present we are organised as three separate Provinces. Developing structures for implementation therefore requires a phased approach.
- There is at present no all-Ireland structure to support ministries which were not represented in the Strategic Plan 2002–2006 but which are now included in this plan.
- The updated plan requires a shift in our collective consciousness: from one which associates the plan with future ministry alone to one that is inclusive of all ministries.
- Our resources are finite. Sustainability of mission and ministry therefore requires that we:
 - Put in place an all-Ireland resource plan
 - Identify and select what and how many centres of ministry can be sustained in the long term and what shorter term action this calls for
 - Discern the future and enable the appropriate handover to other agencies.
- A creative tension between the essential authority and role of the Interprovincial and Provincial Leadership and a devolved decision-making structure needs to be maintained and developed.

- Processes need to be in place to ensure the continuation of the reflective and planning momentum during the transition from one term of office for Provincial Leadership to the next.
- There needs to be greater recognition of the role of laypeople in leadership in ministry.
- A particular challenge will be the implementation of Aim 1, Spirituality and Faith Development. This will require a consultative process, which builds on experience, previous consultations, the Congregational Gathering 2006 and the inter-cultural seminar on Spirituality April 2007.

Towards developing a structure responsible for implementation

The three Provincial Leadership Teams are committed to developing the best approach to implementing this plan. With the 2002–2006 plan a number of steps were taken on the journey of evolving an all Ireland structure for Presentation ministry. This plan for 2007–2012 continues the journey of exploring and developing the best organisational structure to animate, support and develop ministry. The Provincial Leadership Teams will work towards having an initial and evolving structure in place by June 2008.

Milestones

Over the next six years, the Presentation congregation in Ireland intends to reach a number of key milestones in the implementation of this plan.

- Plan published and launched
- Report on three year pilot programme 2002–2006 published
- A three year on-line learning initiative, notschool.net Ireland

- Public policy influencing agenda based on aims of this plan established
- A number of key centres further developed in line with the plan, e.g. South Presentation as a global and inclusive learning hub and Mt St Anne's as a centre for spirituality.
- A green towns initiative
- Women against violence initiative
- Campaign on trade justice sustained
- Sustainable living promoted
- Development education increased
- Spirituality initiatives and theological reflection process developed
- Migrant and refugee support advanced.

Structural and supportive measures

These will build on structural changes already made, which help to deepen our work on an all-Ireland basis, e.g. the Nagle Community, the Presentation Centre for Policy and Systemic Change, and the Interprovincial Justice Commission.

- A phased development of an all-Ireland structure for all ministry development
- Indicators and operational plans
- New group for implementing the spirituality aim
- Fundraising strategy
- Communications strategy including updated website.

Appendix 1

How was this plan drawn up?

THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

This plan is the result of a process of dialogue, consultation and reflection with sisters, co-workers, associates and the people we serve. The voices of people have been heard over the past four years through gatherings, meetings, formal and informal, and from learnings and insights gained from the implementation of the first strategic plan. Through a range of conferences and seminars new thinking and new networks were developed which contributed to this present plan.

A large consultation meeting was held in November 2006. This was attended by 120 people, who described themselves as ‘friends of Nano Nagle’. A DVD of the consultation meeting and questions for reflection was circulated to all Presentation communities and to like-minded individuals and organisations with whom we work.

A meeting was held with those involved in faith and spirituality ministry, and the leadership teams were consulted. A wide range of views, hopes and experiences were shared and heard and have shaped this plan.

What was evident from the many meetings held was a culture of hope, alive within the congregation. There is a willingness to embark on new ways in response to the needs of people pushed to the margins or alienated from society and Church, in their search for meaning and human well-being. Environmental issues were also at the forefront of people’s concerns.

The other key ingredients informing this Plan are the Congregational Gathering 2006 and the first Strategic Plan for Ministry 2002–2006.

THE CONGREGATIONAL GATHERING

The challenging vision and commitments made at the worldwide Congregational Gathering, are a major influence on this Plan, in particular the emphasis on global solidarity, care of the earth, and challenging unjust systems. Sr Terry Abraham, newly elected Congregational Leader, addressing the consultation meeting outlined the challenge:

It’s a huge challenge to change our perception, our behaviour and our choices. If we live with that mindfulness, look at the world with holy eyes, would there be war and violence? would there be hunger and poverty? would there be power over others? would there be exclusion of some? would there be extreme wealth? would there be destruction of the earth?

THE FIRST PLAN FOR MINISTRY 2002–2006

This plan builds on the success and insights from the first Strategic Plan, *Towards a New and Radical Agenda*. This saw the congregation strengthen its focus on learning innovation, social inclusion, human rights and promoting systemic change. It also has begun a process of organisational change with the appointment of programme leaders to work on an all- Ireland basis.

A review of the key learnings from that plan entitled *Actions, Insights and Implementation* was published and circulated. All of these insights go to inform this new plan.