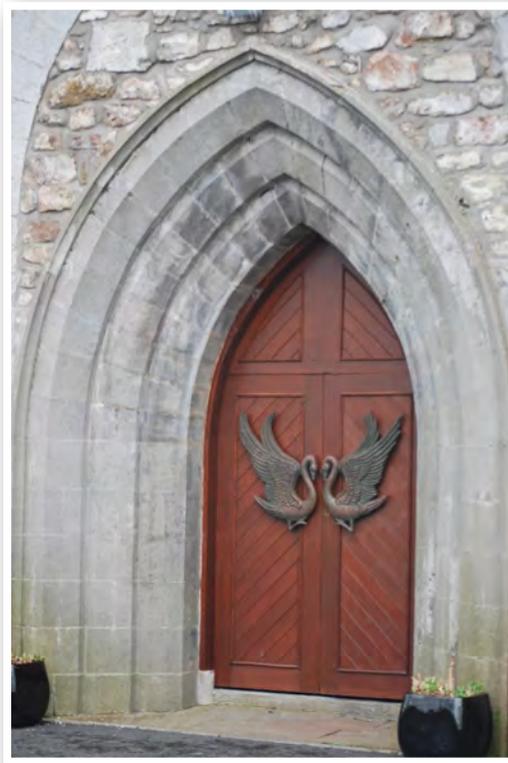


# LEARNING FROM MINISTRY IN THE CHURCH OF IRELAND



## *Sabbatical 2011 Report*

The Rev. Canon Elizabeth P. Beasley  
March – June 2011

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# LEARNING FROM MINISTRY IN THE CHURCH OF IRELAND

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### Introduction

I begin the report on my sabbatical by giving thanks for God’s grace and blessing throughout, and thanks to those in the Diocese of Hawai‘i whose generosity made it possible for me to have a four-month sabbatical, half of which was spent traveling overseas.

God’s blessing became evident, first of all, in an ironical way: even though I was able to go to Ireland, as I had hoped, my exact original plan did *not* come to pass. It soon became clear that what happened instead was far more beneficial and that my original idea was shot through with false assumptions.

I had originally desired to spend virtually all of my time in Ireland living in a small town and “participating in the life there,” including observing the life in the Anglican church in the town. I contacted people in Ireland in order to find a town with a vital church in which my husband, Kirk, and I could live for about seven weeks. I eventually was referred to such a town, with a very vital church. But plans developed in such a way that we ended up spending only one week there. This turned out to be a blessing. The sabbatical would have been far less educational and enriching had we spent the entire time in any one place. Instead, we ended up traveling to several places in Ireland, and I was able to observe the Church of Ireland, and Irish life in general, from a variety of perspectives. This gave me a much broader base from which to learn and to reflect on how what I observed applies to ministry in the Episcopal Diocese of Hawai‘i.

In addition, I eventually realized that the Irish see tourists come and go repeatedly (much as we do in Hawai‘i) and that they might not particularly care about a middle-aged American couple who had decided to spend a few weeks in their town. In other words, my aim to “participate in life” in some town might well have resulted in our being totally ignored. (That said, we did encounter hospitality wherever we went, including in a small village in the west of Ireland, where over the course of our two weeks there we did have some good and enjoyable interactions with the residents.)

The other part of my original plan was to ruminate on a desire that I perceive nowadays in human beings to have life be “safe” and controlled and the consequent attempt to domesticate God. Thirty years ago, I had lived in Ireland for three years. I experienced life there as less controlled and therefore richer and deeper, though also more painful, than life in the United States. I am still reflecting on this basic idea and think it has some merit; however, I am reformulating it a bit. Ironically, I found myself praying to God for safety, especially as Kirk and I set off on the journey and I thought of all the possible things that could go wrong! It was a bit of a comeuppance for me.

The “meat” in the original plan did come to pass. My hope had been to learn how the Church of Ireland trains people for ordination, how they use laity as Lay Readers (people authorized to lead public worship), and how congregations share clergy leadership. In these matters, I was able to observe and to learn a great deal. I see now in retrospect that the great blessing is that God thwarted the original scenario and instead brought about one that was far more enriching.



*Old English building in Rye, Liz & Kirk, Anglican Compass, Irish surf, Canterbury Cathedral*

## ITINERARY

My sabbatical started on March 1. Because of airline schedules and a need to be in Ireland by March 11, we wasted no time at all in leaving and set off at 8:00 a.m. on March 1. We also needed to complete our time in Ireland by May 15, when the tourist season starts: prices skyrocket and crowds of visitors descend on Ireland. As it turns out, we were in Ireland after the visit of the Anglican Primates, and before the visits of Queen Elizabeth II and President Barack Obama. We also managed to depart from England, our point of entry from the United States, before the Royal Wedding on April 29.

The following was our itinerary:

### MARCH 1 – 3

Flew to the mainland and then to England, on three successive days, using three different airlines, in order to make use of frequent flyer miles.

MARCH 4-9

Visited my sister and her husband, as well as a friend of Kirk's, in Kent, England. During this time, I met with the Rector of the Wye Parish Church about ministry there and his being responsible for several churches. Wye is a small village in the Diocese of Canterbury.



*The Wye Parish Church, Diocese of Canterbury*

ASH WEDNESDAY,  
MARCH 9

Visited Canterbury Cathedral, attended Ash Wednesday worship, and had a guided tour.

MARCH 10

Traveled to Dublin, Ireland.

MARCH 11-24

Stayed at the Church of Ireland Theological Institute, which trains people for the priesthood. On March 11-13, I participated in the monthly gathering of students in the part-time program. We also saw sights in Dublin, including the Chester Beatty Library (which houses biblical manuscripts from as early as the second century) and Trinity College Dublin (which houses the Book of Kells, an illustrated manuscript of the Gospels from about the year 800). One Sunday, I participated in worship at Christ Church Cathedral, at the invitation of one of its Canons, the Rev. Patrick Comerford, an instructor at the Theological Institute.

MARCH 24-28

Traveled to and throughout the Diocese of Cashel and Ossory, which covers the southeast corner of Ireland. The Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Michael Burrows, had arranged a variety of meetings for me in different parts of the diocese to address the various interests I came to Ireland to observe: the training and ministry of Diocesan Lay Readers, preparation for ordination, and congregations sharing a priest. Bishop Burrows was quite hospitable in arranging these meetings and in inviting Kirk and me to stay in his home. We realized this also gave us the chance to visit a clergy family and appreciated the privilege. (Bishop Burrows is married and has four children.) During the four-day visit, I attended the monthly meeting of the Di-



*Road signs in the Diocese of Cashel and Ossory, as we drove from the Rock of Cashel to the Cathedral in Lismore.*

cese are Deans of Cathedrals (the Diocese has six cathedrals, for reasons that will be explained below). All of these various meetings involved meals, of course, and necessitated driving around a large Diocese, which was an adventure in itself!

#### MARCH 29 – APRIL 1

Journeyed to and stayed in Sligo. We chose Sligo because it is the town closest to County Donegal, where we were going next, that we could reach by train. (Train travel is far more relaxing than driving on the left over narrow roads. It is also cheaper.) Sligo has the added benefit of being associated with W. B. Yeats; when I went to Ireland 30 years ago, I worked for the Yeats family.

#### APRIL 2 – 16

Stayed in the town of Glencolmcille, County Donegal. This is a small village on the Atlantic Coast in the southwest corner of one of the most remote counties in Ireland. The town's name means the glen of St. Colm Cille, which is the Irish name for St. Columba, the founder of the monastery on the Isle of Iona in the sixth century and one of the three primary Irish saints (the

Diocesan Lay Readers and met the following people: the priest who oversees the Lay Readers; the Director of Ordinands for the Church of Ireland as a whole; the Diocesan Director of Ordinands; a newly ordained Curate; and the Rector and Curate of a cure that consists of nine congregations. On Sunday, I preached at and participated in the worship at St. Iberius, Wexford, which is the largest congregation in that cure. Three of the people I met in the Dio-

#### **Recorded for Posterity: The Irish Census**

The Republic of Ireland conducts its Census every five years, in years ending with a 6 and a 1. They conduct it by having a "Census Night": on a certain night in the year, every single person in Ireland or on a ship in Irish waters must be counted. This year, Census Night was Sunday, April 10, when Kirk and I were in Glencolmcille. So we filled out a census form. It is amusing to us, who have spent part of our time these past few months conducting genealogical research by looking up American census data on the Internet, that we ended up in the 2011 Irish Census.

other two are St. Patrick and St. Bridget). We discovered that Glencolmcille has an annual pilgrimage on St. Columba's feast day, June 9, to various sites in the village and its environs connected with the saint. These sites consist of a well, a number of standing stones, and a ruined church, to which we hiked one day. On another day, we met a local elderly resident who told us stories that circulated around about St. Columba.

We rented a cottage in the village for two weeks. We purposely did not travel far afield from Glencolmcille. We hiked and drove to nearby area sights, such as the Slieve League (the highest sea cliffs in Europe), the town of Ardara (the home of Irish weaving), and Port (an abandoned fishing village on a magnificently beautiful bay fed by streams from the bog; one reaches Port by traveling over six miles of a one-lane road through the bog, dotted with the occasional farmhouse and a number of sheep).

I discovered once we were in Glencolmcille that the area is a tremendous place to observe sheep, which were everywhere, including in our yard, which had been fenced to keep them out. Their presence prompted me to reflect on the biblical images of sheep and shepherds.

The village has an Anglican church, which is in a cure consisting of five congregations under the leadership of one priest. We attended the service there on the two Sundays we were in town: one of them was the one Sunday in the month that the priest was celebrating Holy Communion; on the other, a Diocesan Lay Reader led Morning Prayer.



*Directional signs to places in Glencolmcille associated with the saint for whom the valley is named.*



*The Anglican church in Glencolmcille is visible from everywhere in the valley and the village, which is out of sight to the right.*

This church seemed to represent a microcosm of a certain aspect of Irish history, with its physical location (very prominent and visible from everywhere in the valley), its rectory (large, with extensive grounds on the best land, according to one local Roman Catholic resident, but now deserted), and its grazing lands leased to neighboring Roman Catholics.

The village of Glencolmcille was interesting in another respect: In the 1950s, the local Roman Catholic priest started a folk village in order to help ensure the financial viability of the town over the long term. The folk village, named Fr. McDyer's Folk Village after the priest, shows the traditional local way of life. The village has been added to over the years. In addition, in the 1980s, a language school, *Oldeas Gael*, was founded in the town to teach the Irish language to visitors. Both institutions are open from Easter through September. Because we left the town the day before Palm Sunday, we did not see them in operation but were very aware that the whole town was gearing up for their opening and the arrival of a throng of visitors. I was interested in these institutions because similar economic situations exist in Hawai'i: remote villages and islands that strive to preserve the traditional way of life but that are suffering economically compared to more cosmopolitan O'ahu.

APRIL 16-24

Stayed in Greystones, County Wicklow, in the home of a parishioner of St. Patrick's Church, the Church of Ireland congregation there. (The parishioner was out of town.) This is the town and congregation to which I had been referred, by now-retired Archbishop John Neill of Dublin. Greystones is an upscale town along the coast of the Irish Sea, the last stop on the commuter train traveling south from Dublin. It has the highest proportion of Anglicans of any town in the Republic of Ireland (about 9 percent). St. Patrick's is quite vital and is the only congregation I saw in Ireland that does not share its priest with another congregation.

We spent Holy Week in Greystones, and attended St. Patrick's for services on Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, and the Easter Vigil on Saturday evening. The Rector, the Rev. David Mungavin, with whom I had been corresponding before leaving Hawai'i, invited me to preach and to celebrate the Eucharist on Maundy Thursday. I also read a lesson and helped to administer the chalice at the Easter Vigil. Despite the busyness of Holy Week, the Rev. Mungavin spent some time talking with me about the congregation and his experience there and showing me a portion of the Rectory. He is relatively new: he had been there about 18 months and had come from Scotland. His predecessor had been Rector for 35 years.

We attended the Good Friday service in Dublin at Christ Church Cathedral, to which I wanted to return. Christ Church Cathedral has exceptional liturgy and a world-class choir. We left Ireland on the afternoon of Easter Sunday for London, where we laid over a day at a hotel near Heathrow Airport in order to catch an early flight on Tuesday.

A P R I L 26 – M A Y 5

Flew to Washington, DC, on April 26. Visited my parents in Maryland and then friends in Florida.

M A Y 6

Flew home to Hawai‘i.

M A Y 7 – J U N E 30

At home in Hawai‘i.

## FINANCES

In terms of finances, we did well in planning, except in two instances. One is that we took \$1,000 in travelers’ checks, only to discover that using an appropriate ATM is far preferable. Banks will not cash travelers’ checks; we had to go to special currency exchange offices, which are not numerous. However, we took travelers’ checks because our research ahead of time had shown that our ATM card through First Hawaiian Bank is on an ATM network (the Star network) that does not exist in Europe. Once we arrived there, we found out that we were able to use our ATM card at machines with a MasterCard logo. When we did this, we had the best exchange rate (with a fixed international transaction fee); when we cashed travelers’ checks, we did not have a good exchange rate.

The second financial piece that did not work as anticipated was renting a car. Our original plan had been to use public transportation exclusively. However, once we decided to go to Glencolmville, we realized we had to rent a car because the town is so remote. In addition, we needed a car to go to the various meetings that Bishop Burrows had arranged for me in his Diocese. An Irish person in my neighborhood had advised me to make any car reservation before we left the States. In neither case were we able to do that. I do not think it would have mattered. We ended up having to pay full price for car insurance because otherwise the rental agency would have placed a huge hold on my credit card, and because I was unsure whether my credit card or our personal auto insurance would have covered any accidents. (It turns out our GEICO policy does not cover overseas rentals.) Having the insurance gave greater peace of mind, especially while traveling on narrow country roads among speedy drivers, but it was expensive.





*Anglican church in Glencolmcille, Cathedral chancel & ceiling in Kilkenny, Drumcliffe cemetery where W. B. Yeats is buried, Rock of Cashel*

## The Church of Ireland

The Church of Ireland is the Anglican province in Ireland. It covers the whole of the island of Ireland, both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. In fact, some of the Church's 12 dioceses cross the border between North and South.

The Church is divided into two provinces: Armagh and Dublin, each with an Archbishop. The Archbishop of Armagh is always the primate for the Church of Ireland. The provincial division does not follow political lines either: basically the country is divided in half on an east-west line.

All but three of the 12 dioceses actually consist of several old dioceses that have been bound together under one bishop.

The names reflect these unions: e.g., the Diocese of Dublin and Glendalough, or the Diocese of Cork, Cloyne, and Ross. One diocese, Cashel and Ossory, actually consists of six



former dioceses. I visited this diocese and traveled around it extensively over the course of four days, thanks to the hospitality of the Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Michael Burrows. He not only has six dioceses, more than any other bishop in the Church of Ireland, he also has six cathedrals!

This union of diocesan borders, and likewise the similar union of congregations under common clerical leadership, reflects the history of Ireland. To put it simply (and perhaps simplistically), the Church of Ireland used to be the established church body in Ireland. Following disestablishment in 1871, and then the political division of Ireland in 1922, Anglican presence in the Republic decreased substantially.

Anglicans are more numerous in Northern Ireland than in the Republic. I noticed when I was at the Church of Ireland Theological Institute that I was hearing a Northern Ireland accent much more than I ever did when I lived in Ireland 30 years ago. Of 41 total students in the Institute's various programs of preparing for ordination, 21 are from Northern Ireland, 15 from the Diocese of Dublin and Glendalough, and 5 from elsewhere in the Republic of Ireland, according to the Institute's directory.

A number of people told me that the character of the Church of Ireland is different in Northern Ireland than it is in the Republic. It tends to be more evangelical and more "conservative." For example, one woman priest from the North but working in the South said that it is harder for a woman priest to get a position in a church in the North. The Church of Ireland in the Republic tends to be of a "Low Church" nature, though some Anglo-Catholic parishes do exist. For example, I observed that people rarely crossed themselves, and except in Glencolmcille, they sat for prayers. I am comfortable with either standing or kneeling, as we do in American churches, but sitting while praying just felt strange.

Many of the buildings, both churches and rectories, are very old and very large. As I traveled about the country, I repeatedly had the thought that we in Hawai'i have no building problems at all in comparison with what they must deal with in Ireland. Some of the churches

### Church of Ireland Statistics

Figures from 2006 show the following breakdown (the population of both countries is now larger):

Northern Ireland: 281,000 (out of a population of 1,610,000, or 17.5 percent)

Republic of Ireland: 118,948 (out of a population of 4,239,848, or 2.8 percent)

Number of "parochial units": 450+

Number of stipendiary clergy: 500+

Source: The Northern Ireland numbers are from a statistics document given to The Porvoo Church Leaders' Meeting in Cardiff, Wales, in March 2006; they are listed as the latest available. The statistics from the Republic of Ireland are from the 2006 Census, given at <http://www.cso.ie/statistics>. The numbers of congregations and clergy are from the Church of Ireland web site: <http://www.ireland.anglican.org>, >About.

are hundreds of years old and cavernous. Most of them I entered were quite chilly, as heating them would be a major expense and difficult to accomplish. The congregations did not seem bothered by the cold, but simply worshipped wearing their coats.

## FAITH

I was favorably impressed by the congregants that I met and observed in the Church of Ireland. The populations of the churches were often small, but the people who were there appeared to be faithful and sincere. I have often wondered which is preferable: to pull into a congregation as many people as possible, as we tend to want to do in an American context, or to have fewer people who nevertheless are present because they are truly interested in being faithful to Jesus Christ. Being in these Irish congregations, which were small but seemed faithful, raised the question again for me.



*An example of a large Celtic cross, this one in the churchyard of Drumcliffe, County Sligo.*

I was also impressed by the clergy, seminarians, and instructors I met. They had a seriousness about their faith, more than what I find in The Episcopal Church. Several times people spoke about “doing the right thing before God.” I also observed their ability and inclination to think theologically, and in great depth. I saw this even among part-time, first-year students when I sat in on their theological reflection workshop.

It was interesting for me to be in Ireland among Anglicans. When I lived there before, I was almost exclusively among Roman Catholics, and therefore heard Irish history from a Roman Catholic point of view. I picked up several things from being among Anglicans. One was their own collective pain over the history and the atrocities committed against *them*. Another was a sense of collective guilt for the history and for the Anglican role in the prejudice that has kept Protestant and Roman Catholic so separate. There currently is a great move for

reconciliation. The residential weekends of the part-time program at the Theological Institute are divided into modules; the theme of the module when I was there was reconciliation, and it is a theme that runs throughout the training in some form or other. I sat in on an excellent seminar on sectarianism, viewed from both historical and theological points of view. (I am not sure whether anyone else noted the irony that during a weekend in which they were always talking about “the other,” Kirk and I were there as strangers — as “the other.”)

On that note, I was surprised to see a great deal of cooperation and interaction between the Church of Ireland and the Roman Catholic Church, at least in the eastern part of the country. A number of people described areas of cooperation between the two bodies. For example, in Greystones, County Wicklow, an upscale town south of Dublin where I spent Holy Week, the Anglican and the Roman Catholic parishes hold a joint Good Friday service at noon. In the small town of Leighlinbridge, County Carlow (Diocese of Cashel and Ossory), I attended a meeting of Diocesan Lay Readers. It took place in a parish hall/community center owned by the Roman Catholic Church. The priest in the town related a great deal of cooperation between the two churches.

I also picked up a sense of collective guilt regarding the current economic crisis. To me, it sounded theological. There was also, however, anger at the Irish banks and bankers (justifiably so). The prevailing theme I heard in many sermons was “Don’t worry. God is with you.”

## RECTORIES

Churches are required to give their Rector or Vicar a place to live. If a priest is serving several congregations, obviously they get only one house; however, if the union of parishes has a Curate or other Assistant, that person lives in the Rectory of one of the other congregations. Rectories are typically quite large. One person told me that the supplied housing in Dublin might be an apartment in some cases, but this seems to be unusual. A seminarian also said that nowadays ordinands considering curacies might need to base a decision on the size of the Rectory, depending on his or her family situation. The Rectories that I saw were very large and in various states of repair. Clergy I spoke with were quite aware that vestries needed to have a commitment to the upkeep of the Rectories.

Clergy have their offices in the Rectories, which are usually (though not always) right next to the church. St. Patrick’s, Greystones, has a five-year-old parish hall complex with church offices, but even the Rector there has his primary office in his home. Likewise, Bishop Burrows in the Diocese of Cashel and Ossory has his office in his home.

My impression was that there is a much greater blending of personal and professional lives than exists in The Episcopal Church. On the one hand, I was impressed by this: ministry seemed natural to the clergy I met, a part of who they were and a part of their everyday life, even those who were latecomers to the priesthood. On the other hand, I could see that clergy families were far more affected by the ministry than if the clergy were driving to an office located somewhere else. I understand the potential dangers of blending personal and professional lives, and I know from personal experience the limitations and frustrations of living in a Rectory next to the church. However, in my work in the Diocese of Hawai‘i I have occasionally recommended to clergy, especially those newly ordained, that they live in

the rectory or vicarage so that they could more easily develop relationships with the people. I am continuing to reflect on how living in a Rectory, and especially having one's primary office there, affect one's ministry.

## COMPARISON TO HAWAI'I

Obviously, with a membership of close to 400,000 (I could not find figures for Average Sunday Attendance), one could say that a comparison between the Church of Ireland and the Episcopal Diocese of Hawai'i is unfair or even meaningless. Several times people told me, as I asked about various structures and processes in the Church, that they are operating on a provincial level, whereas I have to operate at a diocesan level. Certainly we could not in the Diocese of Hawai'i duplicate their training program, at least not if we were undertaking to do so by ourselves. (Perhaps with other denominations? Other bodies in the Pacific?)

Nevertheless, I learned things there that I believe are of potential benefit to us in Hawai'i. The Church of Ireland is dealing with similar situations to some of those that we face in Hawai'i. These are enumerated below.

### URBAN AND RURAL

Ireland, like Hawai'i, consists of large urban and very cosmopolitan areas (Dublin and Belfast), a number of small towns, and some very rural and remote areas. Church of Ireland congregations exist in all such places. Thus, the church structure and governance needs to be adaptable to ministry in a variety of settings. In Hawai'i, half of our congregations are on O'ahu and half scattered among small towns and rural areas on four other islands. As a Diocese, we cannot structure ourselves to serve just one demographic situation or one church model.

At the same time, rural or small town settings do not necessarily rule out the need to deal with more typically urban problems. Because of drug use, mental illness, and homelessness on Kaua'i, I used to call ministry at All Saints "urban ministry in a rural setting." In Ireland, the congregation that I visited in Wexford, a town of about 18,000 in the southeast corner of Ireland, had a very urban feel to it, and as I heard the Rector talking with her people, I detected situations that one might associate with more urban areas.

### SMALL CHURCHES

Ireland has some very small Anglican congregations. That is one reason that they share clergy leadership with other congregations. We in Hawai'i also have a number of small congregations. I wanted to learn what I could from the Irish model, especially in terms of structures and leadership. At this point, what seems most applicable is some form of shared clergy leadership (see section "Congregations Sharing Clergy").

## DIVERSITY

Hawai'i is known for its great diversity. What amazed me about Ireland on this trip was the incredible diversity I saw, at least in Dublin (though it also exists in the country). Most of the service workers we encountered in Dublin were not Irish; they were Polish. Polish grocery stores are everywhere, including in some country towns. I saw news reports about African churches. The Chinese have been in Ireland for some time. Often as we walked around Dublin, we realized that we were seeing (or hearing) very few Irish, as a percentage of the population.



*A Chinese takeout restaurant in Donegal, a town of about 2,500 people in northwest Ireland. Chinese “take aways” are all over the country.*

In fact, I realized as a result of this entire trip that we in Hawai'i can no longer say that we are where the rest of the world will be. They are already there. I was astounded by the ethnic and cultural diversity I saw everywhere I went, in Ireland, England, and the mainland United States.

## MINORITY RELIGION

In Hawai'i, Christianity is a minority religion, and Anglicanism is a minority within the Christian denominations here. In Ireland, Anglicans are a minority: Roman Catholics are far more populous in the Republic, and in Northern Ireland, Presbyterians are more populous than Anglicans. The Presbyterian Church in Ireland, the largest Presbyterian body, numbers about 300,000 people island-wide. However, 96 percent of its membership is in the North, making it the largest Protestant body in Northern Ireland. (Roman Catholics still outnumber Presbyterians in the North, however.)<sup>1</sup>

During a class at the Church of Ireland Theological Institute, I heard an instructor comment that at some point in time the Church of Ireland realized they were not going to convert Roman Catholics — and therefore just what does evangelism mean in an Irish context? In addition, Ireland is dealing with increasing secularism; at the beginning of June a World Atheist Convention was held in Dublin.<sup>2</sup> People who profess “No religion” in the Census in

<sup>1</sup> Information on Presbyterians come from “Presbyterian Church in Ireland,” Wikipedia, and from the Church’s web site: <http://www.presbyterianireland.org>.

<sup>2</sup> Patsy McGarry, “Dublin hosts first atheist congress,” in *The Irish Times*, Wednesday, 1 June 2011.

2006 numbered 186,000, making it “the second-largest census grouping after Roman Catholic.”<sup>3</sup> In Hawai‘i, as elsewhere, we in the Church also must learn how to address and deal with increasing indifference and occasional hostility to religion.

## LANGUAGE

Because of being in Hawai‘i and knowing the importance of and emphasis on the Hawaiian language in the Episcopal Diocese of Hawai‘i, I was interested in the place of the Irish language in the Church of Ireland. I knew from living there that in Irish history the Irish language had been suppressed, as Hawaiian was here, and that its resurgence had played a role in the revival of the Irish culture. I also knew that students in Irish schools are required to learn Irish. (My friends 30 years ago varied in their reactions to this requirement.) What surprised me in visiting Ireland this time was the prevalence of the language. Everything put out by the government (in the Republic), both spoken and written, is in both English and Irish. If anything, Irish seemed the more prevalent of the two languages on signage. There is

now an Irish-language television station (TG4), which did not exist 30 years ago.



*Virtually all signs in the Republic of Ireland are in both Irish and English. This one advertises a restaurant at Trinity College Dublin.*

I wondered what the prevalence of Irish would be in the Church of Ireland, since one is inclined to associate the Church of Ireland with the English. I realized that this association is simplistic. I met seminarians and priests who preferred using Irish. One priest had been a teacher in an all-Irish school (similar to our Hawaiian charter schools) before becoming a priest. She said she prefers worshipping in Irish. The Church of Ireland publishes an Irish-language Prayer Book. Having said all that, I did not see worship services in Irish. I know that Christ Church Cathedral in Dublin has Irish-language services once a month, the website of the Diocese of Dublin and Glendalough (<http://www.dublin.anglican.org>) can be read in either language, and a guild exists within the

Church of Ireland that promotes the use of the Irish language in the Church, called Cumann Gaelach na hEaglaise (<http://www.cumanngaelachnaheaglaise.blogspot.com/>).

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<sup>3</sup> Róisín Ingle, “Our 256,000 (and counting) atheists, agnostics, humanists and non-religious,” in *The Irish Times*, 4 June 2011.

## COMPLEX HISTORY

The complexity of the role of the Irish language brings me to the final point of comparison: Ireland and Hawai‘i both have a complex history. If anything, I would say that Ireland’s is the more convoluted. While there, we bought a 560-page book called *A History of Ireland in 250 Episodes*, by Jonathan Bardon. Originally a radio program broadcast in five-minute segments each weekday over the course of a year, it tells the history of Ireland in 250 short chapters. One becomes aware upon reading the book that any simple distilling of Irish history (for example, into strict Catholic and Protestant demarcations) just will not do. When I first went to Ireland 32 years ago, I was warned by the American professor who took me not to talk about religion or politics with people because I would not know what I was talking about no matter how long I was there. On being there this time, I could see more forcefully the truth of this statement. The history is incredibly complex, and even the Church of Ireland is not so easily labeled “English” or “Protestant” (and therefore anti-Catholic) as one might be inclined to think.

## ‘CELTIC SPIRITUALITY’

Before going to Ireland, I had had several conversations with people here in Hawai‘i about “Celtic spirituality”: Might this general approach to spirituality, which has become popular in the United States, be a point of similarity between Ireland and Hawai‘i? After all, in Hawai‘i, the lines between “inside” and “outside” are fluid (since our buildings are often open to the outdoors), and natural phenomena play a large role in Hawaiian spirituality.

However, after living in Ireland, I have always been a little suspicious about what is commonly promoted as Celtic spirituality. When I lived there, I was much more aware of Nature and the environment than I had been living in the United States. This awareness, however, came from living in a cold and damp climate at a time when central heating in homes was not common. On this trip, as before, I noticed that one is much more aware of energy consumption than we typically are in the United States. It never seemed to me that the general approach to spirituality and religion among the Irish bore much similarity to many of the books published on the subject of Celtic spirituality. I personally use a book of prayers collected in the Outer Hebrides; while Nature plays a major role in the imagery of the prayers, however, they are far more focused on Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary, and the Trinity.

This recent trip substantiated my previous perception. I spoke with several people in Ireland about Celtic spirituality because I was curious about how it is perceived. One person, who has an excellent grounding in history, said that it is an invention of the Victorian era. So while I can see how books on Celtic spirituality might seem to be applicable to a Hawaiian context, I would also caution against too wholesale an adoption of them as authentic.

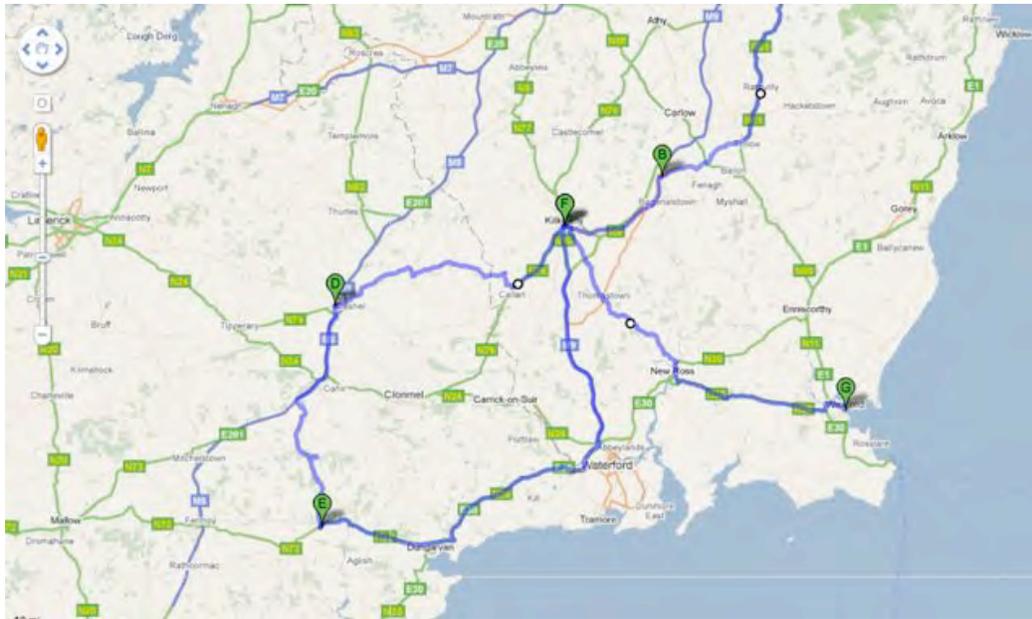




*Liz & car, castle in Leighlinbridge, fishing boat in Killybegs, the ever-present sheep, thatched shed*

## Diocesan Lay Readers

The Church of Ireland makes extensive use of Lay Readers: people who are licensed by the diocesan Bishop to officiate at worship services (generally Morning or Evening Prayer). Dioceses vary in the extent of this ministry, it seems. In some dioceses, there is a distinction between Parochial Lay Readers, who are licensed to officiate only in their own congregation or union of parishes, and Diocesan Lay Readers, who can officiate anywhere in the Diocese. The latter are also allowed to preach. (The former role may have different names in different dioceses.)



*The routes I drove in the Diocese of Cashel and Ossory to visit various people and churches. We originated in Dublin, which is off the map to the north.*

A diocese typically has a Warden of Readers, who oversees the training of the Readers and meets with them regularly. I was privileged to join in the monthly meeting of the Readers in the Diocese

of Cashel and Ossory, along with their Warden, the Rev. Barbara Fryday. This meeting was one of the highlights of my time visiting in the Church of Ireland. They set aside the usual agenda for the evening and instead we engaged in conversation, comparing ministry in our respective settings and the training and requirements for Lay Readers with our Worship

Leaders in Hawai'i. I found the group engaged and lively; they asked good and often provocative questions and seemed serious and knowledgeable about their ministry.

The Diocese of Cashel and Ossory has developed a new course of training for Lay Readers. The Rev. Fryday sent me the outline of the course, called "An Introduction to the Christian Faith: A Two-Year Course in Faith Formation." It has six modules: the Bible, liturgy, theology, mission and ministry, ethics, and history. Each module has a fairly extensive reading list (at least six books in each), and each requires a 1,500-word assignment as the means of assessment.

At the meeting, the group and the Rev. Fryday explained that they have fought to have this course count in lieu of the one-year Formation Course now required of those entering the ordination process. (See the section below on Ordination for more about this course.) In order to have the diocesan Lay Readers course count, they had to increase the educational level required. I heard some pushback to this change among the Readers themselves. Some who had long experience as Lay Readers felt that had such requirements existed when *they* came through the training, they never would have made it. Some protested that they were basically farmers and this training was too scholarly. (This Diocese contains the best farmland in the country.) At the same time, they expressed an expectation that Lay Readers — and, in fact, *all* laity — should be knowledgeable about the Christian faith and Anglican tradition. Indeed, one Reader expressed amazement that the Warden in a congregation she had gone to serve on a Sunday morning would not automatically know that if a Lay Reader is showing up, the church will not be having Holy Communion that Sunday.

According to the diocesan web site, Readers are commissioned in a service at one of the diocesan cathedrals (St. Canice's Cathedral in Kilkenny, the town that is central in the Diocese and the site of the Bishop's residence). The web site says: "At this service candidates make their declaration of faith, take their oath of obedience to the Bishop, and receive authority for their ministry."<sup>4</sup>

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HAWAI'I

When I read the outline for the Readers' Course in the Diocese of Cashel and Ossory, my first thought was: "This will never work in Hawai'i." It is very focused on reading. I remembered our realization that reading weighty books would not work with the Na Imiloa diaconal training group.

One of the things that most struck me while in Ireland was the prevalence of books. Bookstores were everywhere. Ireland is known for being a land of writers, poets, and playwrights.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.cashel.anglican.org>; > Ministry > Lay Ministry.

There are multiple daily newspapers. Dublin was being celebrated while we were there as a City of Literature. In contrast, Hawai'i is not so focused on formal education and reading.

At the same time, Ireland is also an oral culture. That is one of the similarities I had noted between Ireland and Hawai'i that prompted me to undertake this trip. In *Orality and Literacy*, Walter Ong calls Ireland “a country which in every region preserves massive residual orality.”<sup>5</sup> When we were in Glencolmcille, County Donegal, we heard one person quip about the national census form whether the local population would even be able to read it. The Lay Readers' objections that they were “just farmers” seemed to reflect a similar mindset to what we might hear among some in Hawai'i that they are not high on “book-learning.”

I am still pondering these matters and as of this writing have not yet put together concrete suggestions for revising our training for Worship Leaders (which I wrote to begin with). However, here are some preliminary ideas, based on my experience in Ireland:

- ◆ The training needs to be more rigorous than it is. While I do not think we need a two-year course, since we are not going to license Worship Leaders to preach, we do need something more extensive and rigorous than our current half-day workshop.
- ◆ The training probably should begin with required reading to provide a basic background, which is then supplemented during the face-to-face interaction between teacher and student. When I last conducted a Worship Leader training, at the Leaders' Education Day in October 2010, some in the group obviously had prior knowledge of liturgy and history and prior experience in reading or otherwise helping to serve in the worship. Such knowledge and experience are important for those who are going to represent the Church in public worship. I have observed on other occasions when leading the workshop that if someone has never paid any attention to the structure of worship and has never been in front of a congregation, the workshop by itself is not sufficient preparation.
- ◆ In doing a preliminary perusal of the books required in the Cashel and Ossory course, and thinking of the resources I have on my own bookshelf, I think it is possible to put together a basic reading list of some accessible but informative works that would provide a basic background. Let's get real: worship may be an oral event, but someone leading worship, especially in the Anglican tradition, needs to be able to deal with a written text and cannot be intimidated by a book.

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<sup>5</sup> Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), p. 68. .

- ◆ In a similar vein, I have seen the objection to reading and following texts as a simple unwillingness to devote the time to the task. Episcopalians should be serious about worship. If someone wants to lead public worship in the Church, they should be prepared to spend some time learning how. This commitment should also help increase their recognition that leading worship is not a frivolous matter.
- ◆ We need some kind of assessment of knowledge and of the ability to lead worship. I have relied upon a Rector's or Vicar's endorsement of a person, and the requirement that someone licensed as Worship Leader already be a Lector, to try to ensure that the person will have some ability and a general lack of nervousness in being in front of a group. Some more rigorous or systematized assessment would probably be better. (I am thinking of some combination of the following: an oral exam, taking the form of a conversation; a written exam or project; and actually leading worship.)
- ◆ A periodic joint meeting of Worship Leaders on a diocesan level led by a priest designated by the Bishop seems a good idea, to emphasize that they represent a larger body than simply their own congregation: they represent the Church and its tradition. It could also be a time that they discuss issues they have encountered in their ministry.
- ◆ I would suggest licensing Worship Leaders for their own particular congregation at first, and then perhaps for the Diocese. The latter move seems especially useful if we begin to move away from the model of one congregation—one priest and toward a sharing of clerical leadership among congregations. The Worship Leaders could help by leading worship when a priest is unable to be in a particular congregation (as the Lay Readers do in Ireland).
- ◆ I am struck by the requirement in the Diocese of Cashel and Ossory that the Lay Readers make a statement of faith at their commissioning. Shouldn't we have an explicit expectation that the Lay Readers believe what they are saying and doing and are willing to say so publicly?
- ◆ I am struck by the correspondence between what I saw in Ireland and the suggestions of Bishop Henry Bond Restarick in his book on Lay Readers.<sup>6</sup> The book is rather confusing to read in its present format (based as it is on text scanned by Optimal Character Recognition and then not edited), but it is potentially useful if edited.




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<sup>6</sup> *Lay Readers, Their History, Organization and Work; An Account of What Laymen Have Done, Are Doing and Can Do for the Extension of the Kingdom*. Originally published by Thomas Whittaker, New York; reprinted by General Books, Memphis, TN, 2010.



*Trinity College, images from the Church of Ireland Theological Institute*

## Ordination Process in Ireland

I spoke with a variety of people about different parts of the ordination process during my time in Ireland: a bishop on the Church of Ireland Selection Committee, the Director of Ordinands for the Church of Ireland, a Diocesan Director of Ordinands, the Director and faculty of the Church of Ireland Theological Institute (CITI), and students in the ordination process.

The process starts much as it does anywhere else: a person experiences a call to ordained ministry and talks with his or her Rector, or a congregation or priest detects that one of their members seems to be called to ordination and encourages him or her to enter the process. It seemed to me that a number of the students or recently ordained people that I spoke with had served in some prominent position of lay ministry before entering the process, such as Youth Minister, Lay Reader, or Church Administrator.

There seems not to be any standard system for the initial discernment process on the local level; at least I did not hear of one. At some point, however, people in discernment for ordination are recommended to attend the Foundation Course, which is a one-year, non-residential course conducted through CITI. (See more about it below.)

At the conclusion of the Foundation Course, individuals meet with the Church of Ireland Selection Committee. Note that the Committee is for the entire Church of Ireland; in other words, the Province as a whole, not individual Dioceses, approve persons for the ordination process. Presumably, if a Bishop is not at least somewhat in favor of a person's proceeding toward ordination, they would not attend the Foundation Course in the first place. However, we in Hawai'i, and in the U.S. as a whole, are not alone in having the problem of no one being willing to say "no." I had several conversations with people in Ireland in which they talked about having the same problem.

The Selection Committee consists of bishops, clergy, and lay people from around the Church; I am not totally clear on how many of each. The Committee is divided into two panels, so that each panel interviews half of the people coming forward. The Director of

CITI interviews all of them. The Selection Committee makes their report and recommendation to the person's Bishop. One complaint I heard was that often people are waiting to hear the results for about a month.

This year the Selection Committee was meeting on March 29-30 and had 20 persons coming before them for decision. I met several people who are involved in the Selection Committee.

One was the Director of Ordinands for the

Church of Ireland as a whole, the Very Rev. Katharine Poulton; she is also the (new) Dean of St. Canice's Cathedral in Kilkenny, in the Diocese of Cashel and Ossory. She said she attends the Selection Committee gathering, but her role is basically that of Chaplain.

To proceed in the ordination process, however, means that a person not only has to be approved by the Selection Committee, but also has to be accepted for study by Trinity College Dublin. This apparently presents problems at times; I spoke with one person who made it through the Selection Committee just fine, but because of poor past academic performance was not initially approved by TCD.

A student may choose to enter the full-time or the part-time program at CITI, depending on his or her circumstances. (See more details about these programs below.) CITI used to be called the Church of Ireland Theological College, but the Church of Ireland revamped the entire program several years ago and changed the name. According to CITI's Director, the Rev. Dr. Maurice Elliott, anyone preparing for ordination in the Church of Ireland must go through CITI's program. (I specifically asked if someone could attend another university.)



*The entrance gate of the Church of Ireland Theological Institute, Rathfarnham, a suburb of Dublin. Ordinands in the Church of Ireland are trained here.*

The Church of Ireland pays for the entire training: tuition, accommodation, and even the petrol (gasoline) the students use in driving to their placements (internships). Dr. Elliott told me that the CITI program represents €1.4 million in the Church of Ireland budget.

**Eleven areas of expected competency**

Spirituality

Theological Reflection

Pastoral Care

Vision

Leadership

Worship and Preaching

Worship and Liturgy

Communicating the Faith

Management and Change

Administration

Vocation

Dr. Elliott and I spent some time discussing requirements of the ordination process. I told him of the seven canonical areas required of priests in The Episcopal Church Canons. The Church of Ireland has specified eleven areas, but they are not entirely academic in nature. Dr. Elliott showed me a grid in which these requirements form one axis. The other axis contains the different stages in the process: at selection, at initial training, and in ongoing ministry once ordained. The “Initial Training” column describes what they are expected to learn during their time at CITI. Thus the grid contains a succinct description of what the Church is looking for in persons entering the process, the educational goals of the CITI program, and expectations for ongoing continuing education after ordination.

Dr. Elliott said that each of these eleven areas is meant to be “integrative”: it brings together various areas of academic knowledge and also inte-

grates these with the practice of ministry. For example, one of the areas, Theological Reflection, has this under Initial Training: “Through assignments to show an understanding of the ‘connections’ between Bible, Theology, Life, Ministry, and Culture.” Students in the CITI program engage in a theological reflection seminar during each semester of the program.

I took especial note of the integrative nature of the eleven areas because our General Ordination Exams in The Episcopal Church are intended to be integrative, and because we in Hawai‘i have found the ability to integrate academic knowledge with the practice of ministry to be crucial in the exercise of ordained ministry. I also think that the eleven areas accurately reflect what a priest needs to be able to know and to do.

## CHURCH OF IRELAND THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE (CITI) PROGRAM

I stayed at CITI for my first two weeks in Ireland. CITI is located in Rathfarnham, a suburb of Dublin, and consists of a two-story, eighteenth-century building and a newer “accommodation block,” with rooms for students. The older building contains classrooms, staff offices, a chapel, a kitchen and dining room, and several additional rooms for lodging. CITI put Kirk and me in this building, in a two-room suite, for quite a reasonable price, breakfast included. Those living at CITI are the full-time students (more about that below) and students of the Irish School of Ecumenics, which is a postgraduate program of Trinity College located in Dublin and Belfast.

During my two weeks at CITI, I talked with faculty, staff, and some of the full-time students, mostly over meals in the dining room, and attended some of the worship services. I participated in a residential weekend of the part-time degree program. I was present at CITI during the Foundation Course (see below), and sat in on one of its introductory lectures, but was not able otherwise to participate in the course. Because it was the first meeting for those attending, the presence of an outsider would have been disruptive to the group dynamics and to the purposes of the gathering.

There are several components to the program for ordination:

### FOUNDATION COURSE

This is a one-year, required program of anyone seeking ordination in the Church of Ireland, conducted in conjunction with the distance-learning program at St. John’s College, Nottingham, in England, led by Dr. Christina Baxter. The Foundation Course consists of three weekend residencies at CITI over the course of the year, with at-home work in between. The first weekend of the course occurs in March each year. The course is an introduction to the vocation of ministry and to the coursework involved.

From what I observed of the first meeting of the Course, it is very intense. There were 32 participants, mostly men (there were 5 or 6 women, though the representation of women among the current full-time and part-time students was higher). Those attending seemed nervous, understandably enough, and as though they were trying very hard to meet one another.

### SELECTION COMMITTEE

This is not part of CITI’s program, per se, but is part of the Church of Ireland’s ordination process. Its timing is based on the Foundation Course. Once people have completed the

Foundation Course, they come before the Selection Committee. (See above for more information.)

#### FULL-TIME M. TH. (MASTERS OF THEOLOGY) PROGRAM

Two years of academic work through CITI and Trinity College Dublin (TCD), while living at CITI. Students attend classes from Monday through Thursday; on the weekends they go home, go to a field education placement, or occasionally stay at CITI to do coursework. In the third year they go to a full-time placement and write a dissertation of 18,000 to 20,000 words.

#### PART-TIME M. TH. PROGRAM

This has the same coursework as the full-time program, but stretched over six years instead of three. In other words, what the full-time students cover in one year, the part-time students cover in two. The part-time students also attend nine residential weekends (Friday evening through Sunday lunch) per year, one each month from September through May.

### Observations of the Foundation Course

The focus of the Foundation Course, at least during the portion I observed, was on “God calls you.” It seemed to be addressing the “I am not worthy” feeling among potential ordinands (a feeling I have certainly witnessed among many of those in our own ordination process in Hawai‘i). I spoke with one second-year, full-time student about this initial weekend of the Foundation Course. He said he remembered the weekend well, that it was intense, and that in the year following he experienced fluctuation in his attitude toward ordination and the feeling of “Oh my God, what am I doing?” (my terminology).

Dr. Christina Baxter of St. John’s University, Nottingham, conducted the introductory lecture that I observed and seemed to be a major participant in this initial weekend. Her presentation also fit well with what I have observed among Na Imiloa participants in Hawai‘i. She suggests that we all experience several “calls,” which she presented in a hierarchy; each has an attendant task:

1. The Call to Humanity: learning to be a full human being whom God has made.
2. The Call to Discipleship: negotiating my place in relation to the world; basically learning that the world is not all there is.
3. The Call to be a Christian: determining and living the specific task God has for me in this world.

Her contention is that if a person attempts to do the final call – figuring out his or her specific God-given task – without first working out the other two, problems will arise. A person will be forced to deal with, for example, psychological problems or issues of forgiveness. I remembered what I have observed in seminary and we have often talked about in Na Imiloa: being in the ordination process will make one deal with personal “stuff,” and often God seems to shake up one’s life (i.e., put it in order) when one is preparing for ordination. I thought Dr. Baxter’s presentation put these ideas in a more ordered way.

## NON-STIPENDIARY MINISTRY (NSM) PROGRAM

This program is being phased out. It originally provided for the education of people who would be ordained as priests but serve in non-stipendiary positions. The structure of the training followed the program at St. John's College, Nottingham, leading to a Foundation Degree for Theology in Ministry. The first two years were individual coursework, under the guidance of a Tutor from St. John's. The third year consisted of residential weekends at CITI. A person was then ordained a Deacon and, during one's diaconate year, completed remaining coursework.

During the residential weekend of the part-time students that I attended, there were five additional students who were part of the non-stipendiary program. There was also one woman who had been ordained through the NSM program but was now coming back to get an M.Th.

## PASTORAL PLACEMENT

Following the completion of the bulk of the academic work (after the second year for full-time students, and the fourth year for part-time students), the student then spends a year (two years for part-timers) in a pastoral placement in a parish. I believe the student is ordained as a Deacon at the beginning of this year.

In addition to this ministerial placement, a student writes a dissertation of 18,000 to 20,000 words and puts together a "ministry portfolio." The portfolio consists of work completed during one's time in the program. The student is able to choose what goes into the final portfolio. I was not able to understand fully the purpose of the portfolio, but it seems to be a tool either of assessment and/or of obtaining a curacy. I do note that the student is expected to put some time and attention into the portfolio: it represents 10 credits during the final year, whereas the major individual academic courses of the program (e.g., the New Testament course) are each five credits.

## CURACY

The Curacy is different from the final pastoral placement. The Church of Ireland has a system for placing ordinands in curacies, which several people explained to me. Towards the end of the academic year, the Church of Ireland disseminates a list of open curacies in the Church as a whole and another list of graduates seeking them. This coming year, I was told, there are 18 students and 26 curacies available. Each side — the church and the student — researches the various options and engages in interviews. I was told that nowadays a student might research more than just the congregation; he or she also might investigate how suitable the Rectory and the area are for the student's family.

Then the churches and the students each list their top three choices. The lists are compared, and if everything matches up, then great: students and churches get their top choice, or close to it. If not, then negotiation happens. I was told of one Curate who was not chosen by any of her top three choices. After further negotiation, she did end up in a curacy in another place and is doing fine.

## STRUCTURE OF THE M.Th. PROGRAM

The coursework for the M.Th. is completely prescribed. The curriculum has three core components:

- ◆The Bible and Its Interpretation (Bible),
- ◆Theological Reflection and Christian Identity (theology), and
- ◆Christian Practice in Church and Society (pastoral ministry).

Each core area has two required courses in each of the two years of the full-time program. Those in the part-time program take the Bible and theology courses in years one and three, and the ministry courses in years two and four.

A Church Leadership course is offered in the second semester of year two for full-timers, and in year four for part-timers.

Homiletics is a full-year course in each of the two years. I participated in a homiletics class for the part-time students who were in their first year, and they were already delivering sermons. (I think the weekend I was there was the first time they were preaching.)

Biblical Hebrew and New Testament Greek are offered but seem not to be required.

The only other electives offered are taken the second semester of one's first year (in the second year for part-time students). The student has a choice of one from among the following: Church Music and Worship, Faith Nurture and Christian Education, or Ministry for Reconciliation.

The means of assessment for each of the courses is "2,500 words of coursework." Some classes specifically say they require an essay; other courses are not so specific.

Each year's curriculum also includes "mini-modules" that cover topics of a more practical nature. They are intended to serve as seminars integrating the various elements of one's education. In the first year, the mini-modules are the following:

- ◆Theological Reflection (how to do it)

- ◆ Pastoral Visiting
- ◆ Counseling Skills

<b>M.Th. Course Overview (Full-Time)</b>			
<b>Stage</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>
<b>Mode</b>	<i>Residential Study Practicum</i>	<i>Residential Study Practicum</i>	<i>Parish Training Independent Study Residential Study</i>
<b>Content</b>	<p><b>The Bible &amp; its Interpretation</b></p> <p>1. <u>OT / Hebrew Bible (5)</u></p> <p>2. <u>New Testament (5)</u></p> <p><b>Theological Reflection &amp; Christian Identity</b></p> <p>1. <u>Christian Thinking about God(5)</u></p> <p>2. <u>Jesus the Christ(5)</u></p> <p><b>Christian Practice in Church</b></p> <p>1. <u>Mission, Culture &amp; Social Context (5)</u></p> <p>2. <u>Pastoral Studies (5)</u></p> <p><b>Elective: (1 of 3)</b></p> <p>1. <u>Church, Music &amp; Worship(10)</u></p> <p>2. <u>New Testament (10)</u></p> <p>3. <u>Faith Nurture &amp; Christian Education (10)</u></p>	<p><b>The Bible &amp; its Interpretation</b></p> <p>1. <u>To the Enlightenment Period (5)</u></p> <p>2. <u>To the modern day (5)</u></p> <p><b>Theological Reflection &amp; Christian Identity</b></p> <p>1. <u>Cosmology, Anthropology &amp; the Church (5)</u></p> <p>2. <u>Theology &amp; Ethics (5)</u></p> <p><b>Christian Practice in Church</b></p> <p>1. <u>Liturgy, Worship &amp; Spirituality(5)</u></p> <p>2. <u>Anglican Studies in an Irish Context(5)</u></p> <p><b>Church Leadership Practicalities &amp; Practice (10) (2 Semesters)</b></p>	<p><u>Ministry Portfolio (10)</u></p> <p><u>Dissertation (30)</u></p>

During one's second year as a full-time student, the mini-modules are as follows:

- ◆ Structures of Governance
- ◆ Evangelism
- ◆ Oral Communication

The following are mini-modules that occur throughout one's training:

- ◆ Theological Reflection (actual practice)
- ◆ Pastoral Placement (field education)
- ◆ Spirituality (“exposes students to a range of approaches to Spirituality”)

The means of assessment for the mini-modules is participation and seminar leadership.

All students participate in April in an integrative seminar lasting 3.5 days. This year the integrative seminar was on the Atonement.

<b>M.Th. Course Overview (Part-Time)</b>			
	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>
<b>Mode</b>	<i>Residential Study Practicum</i>	<i>Residential Study Practicum</i>	<i>Residential Study Practicum</i>
<b>Content</b>	<b>The Bible &amp; its interpretation</b> <u>1. OT Hebrew Bible (5)</u> <u>2. New Testament (5)</u>	<b>Church Practice in Church &amp; Society</b> <u>1. Mission, Culture &amp; Social Context(5)</u> <u>2. Pastoral Studies (5)</u>	<b>The Bible &amp; its interpretation</b> <u>1. To the enlightenment period (5)</u> <u>2. To the modern day (5)</u>
	<b>Theological Reflection &amp; Christian Identity</b> <u>1. Christian Thinking about God (5)</u> <u>2. Jesus the Christ (5)</u>	<b>Electives (1 of 3)</b> <u>1. Church Music &amp; Worship (10)</u> <u>2. Faith Nurture &amp; Christian Education (10)</u> <u>3. Ministry for Reconciliation (10)</u>	<b>Theological Reflection &amp; Christian Identity</b> <u>1. Cosmology, Anthropology &amp; the Church(5)</u> <u>2. Theology &amp; Ethics (5)</u>
<b>Stage</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>	<b>Year 6</b>
<b>Mode</b>	<i>Residential Study Practicum</i>	<i>Parish Training Independent Study</i>	<i>Parish Training Independent Study</i>
<b>Content</b>	<b>Christian Practice in Church &amp; Society</b> <u>1. Liturgy, Worship &amp; Spirituality (5)</u> <u>2. Anglican Studies in an Irish Context (5)</u>	<u>Ministry Portfolio over 2 years (10)</u>  <u>Dissertation over 2 years (30 credits)</u>	<u>Ministry Portfolio over 2 years (10)</u>  <u>Dissertation over 2 years (30 credits)</u>
	<b>Church Leadership</b> <u>1. Practicalities &amp; Practice (10)</u>		

## ALTERNATIVE VIEWS

I was privileged to be able to see so much of CITI's program during my short time in Ireland. I was also privileged to hear some alternative views. Not everyone in the Church of Ireland is favorably disposed toward the program. I have said, above, when discussing Diocesan Lay Readers, that the Diocese of Cashel and Ossory campaigned to have their Lay Reader program substitute for the Foundations Course. Some I spoke with thought that CITI's program is neither academic enough nor long enough. Others thought the part-time program too long. They expressed the view that to spend six years preparing for ordination, in an intense program that is a lot of work, especially when combined with work and family responsibilities, is too much. Some part-time students that I spoke with did say that it was burdensome. Many people also said that because the program is so new, no one knows how it will work when the part-time students come to the point of working in internships, which takes place in the fifth and sixth years of the program.

Other people were disappointed that the Non-Stipendiary Ministry program had been eliminated: they said it filled a function, especially for people from the country who are not inclined to enter a full academic program. However, a priest who had originally been an NSM priest and then received a theological degree said that in practice NSMs generally had been treated as second-class citizens. The issues reminded me of what we have discussed in The Episcopal Church about the former Canon 9 priests and possibilities of local formation.

## MY ASSESSMENT OF THE CITI PROGRAM

In general, I was impressed by the structure and content of the CITI program. Below are some specific comments, including possible application to the Diocese of Hawai'i:

- ◆ To have a required program such as the Foundations Course for anyone being considered for the ordination process seems like a good idea. It has several advantages:
  - It is specifically constructed to deal with the questions and issues that arise for a person considering ordination. As I said above, the first weekend of the Course was addressing the very topics that I have seen people in the process struggle with.
  - It is conducted as a group rather than being an individual program. We have known for some years in Hawai'i that formation for ordination must be done in a group of some sort rather than an individual preparing independently.
  - It is a finite time period. After that, the individual and the Church must make a decision about whether or not a person will proceed. We have seen in Hawai'i that having a time certain for making a decision would be an advantage.

- ◆ I was impressed by the eleven areas of knowledge expected of those being ordained. I am inclined to insist upon the need for academic knowledge in those being ordained priests. What impresses me about the eleven areas in the Church of Ireland process is that they integrate academic knowledge with the practice of ministry and they include topics often overlooked in American theological education, such as leadership and administration. Hawaiian congregations demand that the priest exercise strong leadership. I told Dr. Elliott of our experience that graduates of U.S. mainland seminaries are not prepared by their education to accept this responsibility. I also noted the requirement in the eleven areas and in the program itself to know about different approaches to “spirituality.” We in Hawai‘i (at least in the Bishop’s office) have noted the need for priests and deacons to have some idea of what their spiritual orientation is, but I have not ever before seen a seminary course specifically geared toward helping students learn this.
- ◆ Having the same coursework for both part-time and full-time students is commendable. I admit I am not completely clear on how this is achieved. I know that part-time students do much of their work online, while full-time students attend some of their classes at Trinity College. I do not know how the part-time students fulfill the same requirements that these classes covered.
- ◆ Including regular and intentional theological reflection in the program is an excellent idea. We have talked in Hawai‘i about the need for clergy to be able to think theologically. Instruction and practice in theological reflection throughout one’s formation would provide a good foundation for continuing to do this throughout one’s ministry.
- ◆ The program is very structured and everything is laid out in CITI’s handbook, including the descriptions, learning outcomes, teaching and learning methods, required reading, and assessment mode for each class. Even the date for submitting a final essay is given. After “building the plane as we fly it” in our formation process in Hawai‘i, and knowing the difficulties in putting together a program, I was impressed by the well-thought-out and complete structure in Ireland.
- ◆ The program provides the basics of what people need to know to be a priest, both academic and practical. Such knowledge is difficult to impart in two or three years, and I have read enough about theological education to know that seminaries these days are increasingly having a hard time fitting in everything that needs to be covered.
- ◆ The program is designed to form priests who will serve in some sort of pastoral ministry (primarily if not solely parochial ministry, it seems). Having attended two different seminaries myself — one an academic divinity school and the other a denominational

seminary designed to form priests — I think the latter is preferable if one is actually called to pastoral ministry.

- ◆ I have mixed reactions to the requirement that *everyone* being ordained in the Church of Ireland must go through this program. On the one hand, some people might be especially suited to study at another university. On the other hand, we know that part of the role of seminary study is to establish friendships and relationships with one's peers, as these form the collegial relationships that become important during one's ministry. I wonder if a person who studied elsewhere would always feel like the odd one out in later ministry. (Feeling like the odd one out can sometimes be useful or appropriate, however.)
- ◆ I did note the skewed demographics among the students, with so few from rural counties in the Republic of Ireland. In part, this probably reflects the demographic distribution of Anglicans as a whole. However, I also wonder if there is some dynamic in the program itself that discourages people in rural areas from participating.



*St. Canice's Cathedral in Kilkenny, church doors in Drumcliffe, the Ha'penny Bridge in Dublin, the town of Dalkey, Gaelic football in Glencolmcille*

## Congregations Sharing Clergy

Many congregations in the Church of Ireland share clerical leadership, in any of several configurations. One priest might serve more than one church, or two or more priests share the leadership of several churches. The term that seems often used for this setup is a “union of parishes.” In our setting in Hawai'i, since “parish” has a specific canonical meaning that would not apply in this kind of situation, we would have to use some other term. (The term “union” might also suggest something to our parishioners that would not technically be the case.)

I was told before I arrived in Ireland that some dioceses had been more successful at combining congregations than others. While I was there, I did not have sufficiently wide experience to witness what the differences were among dioceses. I attended worship of some sort

in three different dioceses, in six different congregations, and met several clergy in addition to those whose worship services I attended. From these experiences, and from talking with people, I would make the following observations:

- ◆ The most common scenario, it seemed, was two or more priests serving several churches. This was also the scenario in the one church (other than Canterbury Cathedral) that I attended in England. Sometimes each priest would have the primary responsibility for one of the congregations, but they would also share responsibility for some of the other, smaller ones. Sometimes it seemed that all the priests “floated.”
- ◆ The healthiest church I saw (by many of the benchmarks we typically use for assessing churches) was St. Patrick’s, Greystones. They had a thriving Sunday school, an active choir and music director, a new parish hall complex, and a congregation that was truly welcoming (though all churches we visited welcomed us warmly). The church is served by one priest, and that priest serves only that church. They will be getting an intern in September, the Rector said. The church has several advantages that other congrega-



*St. Patrick’s, Church, Greystones, County Wicklow, Diocese of Dublin and Glendalough.  
St. Patrick’s is the one congregation I encountered that does not share its clergy leadership.  
The church is on the left and a new parish hall complex on the right.*

tions do not. The most obvious advantage is that the church is in an upscale suburb of Dublin with a relatively large population of Anglicans. This makes me wonder whether a congregation has to have a certain percentage of the local population in order to be viable. Another possible advantage is that the previous Rector had been there for a



*The listing of services in the union of parishes that includes Glencolmcille, which is the most southwest of the towns listed. Lettermacaward, at the most northeast end, is 27 miles away along country roads.*

long time (35 years), had had a very effective ministry, and now, though retired and living in the town, knows how to be retired appropriately. He does not interfere but is helpful to the current Rector when called upon.

◆ On the other end of the scale was the church in Glencolmcille, County Donegal. The priest leads worship there once a month. He is the sole priest serving five different churches. His title is “Bishop’s Curate” (I am not sure why). He seemed quite faithful and well-meaning, but tired. The Sunday attendance for each of the two Sundays we were there was about 12, maybe 15 for the Eucharist. (It was interesting that there was not a great deal of overlap between the people present on those two Sundays.) The congregation had the disadvantage of being in a village that was obviously Roman Catholic. (The Roman Catholic church was on the main street; when a service was about to happen, one had the feeling of a great tide of people flowing toward the church.)

- ◆ My impression is that if a congregation cannot have its own priest, having two priests serve three congregations (or some other set of multiples) is better than having a single priest serve only two congregations. The latter scenario lends itself too easily to fights (“you’re spending more time with *them* than with *us*”). Having several priests floating, even if the priests each have primary responsibility for one of the congregations, possibly lessens possessiveness on everyone’s part. It also lessens the possibility of the priest’s feeling guilty for spending more time with one congregation than the other (or just liking them better).
- ◆ The conclusion that one priest serving two congregations is the least desirable scenario comes in part from a priest I knew in the Diocese of Massachusetts who several times had served combinations of part-time congregations. He said that if one is serving two part-time churches, having them divided  $\frac{3}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{4}$  is better than both of them being half-

time. In the latter scenario, both churches *expect* the priest really to be full-time, or close to it. In the former scenario, the expectations on the part of the ¼-time church are not as great.

- ◆ No matter how leadership might be shared, there still must be a bond between the priest and the people. In this lies the great danger in these situations in Ireland: that the priest would become exhausted performing the basics in each of the congregations, without developing any real relationship with the people. A priest should not be a functionary floating around, celebrating the Eucharist and showing up for major pastoral emergencies. I wonder whether living in a Rectory that is next to one of the congregations promotes such relationships. However, the priest serving nine congregations in Wexford was

quite impressive in how truly she cared for her people; she lived in a Rectory, but it was a new house away from the congregations. The relationship between people and priest seems to depend in large measure on the priest, but time is also a factor.

- ◆ Lay Readers (in our language, Worship Leaders) have a larger role in all of these scenarios of shared clerical leadership. Even St. Patrick's, Greystones, had a Lay Reader who seemed quite knowledgeable and experienced and who had a liturgical role (it

### **A Curate with Experience**

One interesting setup I saw was in Wexford, the union in the Diocese of Cashel and Ossory with nine separate congregations. This union had two clergy: a woman Rector from the Church of Ireland and a male priest in his 60s from Sweden who was serving as the Curate. I am not clear on whether he was from the Church of Sweden or from an Anglican body in Sweden. I do know that the Rector, the Rev. Maria Janssen, of Swedish descent herself, had had difficulty finding a curate in Ireland and so had imported the priest from Sweden. The priest was originally from the Faroe Islands, remote islands northwest of Scotland, originally settled by Irish monks, with a very demanding environment.

What I found most interesting was that the Curate, the Rev. Svend Rasmussen had had an full career in Sweden. It is apparently not uncommon in Sweden for a priest nearing the end of active ministry to serve as a Curate. I thought this was a great idea: Instead of using priests who are nearing retirement or who are already retired to serve alone in part-time congregations, to have them serve as Curates under a Rector. We know that many priests, after 20 or 30 years or so of being Rector or Vicar, would gladly give up responsibility for Vestry meetings, building upkeep, and so on. Yet they want to keep serving and they would bring with them years of experience. The crucial thing, of course, would be that they would have to be willing to offer their experience and service while at the same time giving up "being in charge." They would essentially become "kupuna." Some priests could do this quite well; for others, their egos would get in the way.

seemed similar to that of our Deacons, but he did not read the Gospel); he was also authorized to preach. If we in Hawai'i are to share priests among congregations, we would do well to elevate the role and training of the Worship Leaders. We might also consider training and licensing Pastoral Leaders to help out in the congregations.

- ◆ I met various clergy from five Cathedrals in Ireland. Even these *Cathedrals* shared *their* clergy with other congregations, including Christ Church Cathedral in Dublin, a major institution of long history (dating back to the Viking founding of Dublin): it had three other congregations in its cure. Its clergy consists of a Dean, two Vicars, and a Curate.
- ◆ A major ingredient in congregations sharing clergy successfully is the attitude of the priests. This kind of ministry seems to require a different mindset than what has been the case in American denominations. In the United States, there has been a focus on ministry as a “career” or a “profession,” emphasizing self-reliance and minimizing cooperation and collegiality. To share clergy successfully, it seems the focus must be on the health of the Diocese as a whole, and priests have to be willing to work together. This makes me wonder whether returning to some components of the missionary diocese model in Hawai'i might be a good idea. (We have found it hard to shake the mindset anyway, so why not use it to our collective advantage?)
- ◆ The attitude on the part of the laity would also have to be different. Right now the missionary diocese model creates this conflict in laity thinking: “Someone else will take care of our finances, BUT my congregation is separate from those other ones and it's all I care about.” In the future, laity might be expected to be serious and knowledgeable about their faith, to take more responsibility for their local congregation, and to cooperate enthusiastically in the Diocese.
- ◆ Governance in a shared-ministry model remains a big question. In Ireland, each congregation had its own Vestry (called a “Select Vestry”). A Rector in charge of several congregations, therefore, might attend multiple vestry meetings. I was told at the Lay Readers meeting in the Diocese of Cashel and Ossory that the system is about to change, at least in their Diocese (I am not sure about the rest). I am not clear on the details, but it seems that there will be one Vestry for the entire union, with some kind of committee for each of the congregations. It was a sore point among the people at the meeting; whatever the change was, they did not like it. (My impression was that they did not want to have a joint Vestry.)
- ◆ I will add that the Church of Ireland has very few vocational Deacons. People with whom I discussed this knew of a Deacon's role, but said most Deacons are transitional.





*Students eating at CITI, the Atlantic Ocean, rood screen in Canterbury Cathedral,  
Liz at the wheel, Napoleonic-era signal tower at the Slieve League*

## Making Connections

The last thing I remember my Bishop saying to me before I left on sabbatical was “Make connections.” I kept this in mind as I traveled around Ireland and met people.

Before we left Hawai‘i, Kirk and I gathered gifts to take to people we met. We felt it was important to maintain the Hawaiian tradition of never arriving as a guest without bringing a gift, as a way of showing in Ireland a bit of the aloha spirit of Hawai‘i. We took gifts from the Diocese of Hawai‘i for people in the Church of Ireland. In addition, having read ahead of time that Ireland now has quite a surfing community (the water was far too cold for us!), we also took gifts from the home of surfing, which we obtained from Downing Hawaii. I also ordered several boxes of Hawaiian cookies, knowing that the custom of having “tea and biscuits” (cookies) is widespread in Ireland. Here is a list of what we took:

- ◆ Boxes of cookies from Big Island Candies
- ◆ The book of Gospels in Hawaiian
- ◆ Ka ‘Eukalikia Hemolele (the book of the Holy Eucharist in Hawaiian)
- ◆ *Glory by the Wayside*, a coffee-table book illustrating some of the most picturesque churches in Hawai‘i, including five Episcopal churches
- ◆ A woman’s Episcopal Diocese of Hawai‘i denim shirt
- ◆ Long-sleeved surfing T-shirts
- ◆ Surfing decals

I was grateful to make connections with people in the Church of Ireland by traveling there. I believe that these connections could be maintained, to the mutual benefit of all concerned. I heard one student at CITI talk about spending his summer placement (internship) at a church in North Carolina, the home congregation of an American there attending the Irish School of Ecumenics. Might not it be possible to have a student come here for a

placement in one of our congregations? Or one of our students have a taste of ministry in an Irish congregation?

There is a benefit in encouraging more interchange between the Church of Ireland and the Diocese of Hawai'i. We are looking for alternative models of ministry, while continuing to faithfully serve Christ and maintain the integrity of the Anglican tradition. Ireland and other places overseas offer insights and useful learning for us. It might also be interesting and educational for our clergy and laity to have people from Ireland visit us, whether bishops, priests, teachers, students, or even youth groups. (Many people offered to come! The students in a class in which I participated were jokingly giving me their credentials.)

I will add one note about the people I met: I did not take many pictures of them, as might be evident from the photographs in this report. I felt that taking pictures of people in many of the situations I encountered would have been inappropriate and too stereotypical of American tourists, and that it would have in many cases altered the dynamics.



*The Atlantic Ocean from the beach at Malin Beg, County Donegal. Connected to Hawai'i by the ocean half a world apart.*





*Panorama in Glencolmcille, ewe & lamb*

## Spiritual Fruits

Sabbaticals are intended as a time of rest and refreshment and of devoting more time to learning something that benefits one's ministry than one normally has in the usual work schedule. I believe that for a priest, they should also be a time for spiritual renewal.

I have detailed in the sections above what I learned during my time in Ireland that applies to my work in the Office of the Bishop in the Diocese of Hawai'i. I was also able to relax and spend time with my husband, especially during our two weeks in Glencolmcille and once we returned home to Hawai'i.

Spiritual renewal is not so easy to plan for, as we never really know what God may work in us. Indeed, I have often noticed that Lent "happens to me whether I want it to or not." In other words, God often seems to be working on me during Lent even when I have not consciously undertaken some particular task. In this case, I noticed soon before we left Hawai'i that our schedule had turned out to be such that our time in Ireland exactly coincided with Lent: we were scheduled to arrive the day after Ash Wednesday and to leave the afternoon of Easter Sunday. I wondered with trepidation what God might have in store for me.

Lent started not in Ireland, however, but at Canterbury Cathedral, where we attended an Ash Wednesday Eucharist. Many factors combined to produce a powerful effect suitable to a penitential service: The service took place in the crypt, which was chilly. The liturgy came from the 1662 Prayer Book. The priest had the accent and manner of speaking of Boris Karloff. The ashes were cold and I could feel them on my forehead as I heard the words, "You are dust and to dust you shall return," and later, "Repent of evil and turn to Christ."

As Lent proceeded, a good deal of thoughts and changes did work in me, not always comfortably, brought about by a number of factors:

- ◆ I was returning to a place where I had lived immediately after college, and my life there had been one of both great joy and great pain.
- ◆ It was my first genuine break in 13 years of ministry, and "relaxing" was hard at first.

- ◆ At the same time, for the first few weeks I was still “working”: talking to bishops, priests, instructors, and students about church matters. This was sometimes difficult when I was also exhausted and part of me just wanted to relax.
- ◆ This was an extended trip to a place that was surprisingly new to me. Ireland has changed a great deal to my eyes, and Kirk had never been there before.

All of these factors combined to force some changes in me, spiritually and emotionally. By the time Good Friday arrived, I felt that I had died with Christ and I could feel myself changed and renewed, thanks be to God. One particular book helped tremendously: Soren Kierkegaard’s *The Sickness Unto Death*. Not exactly light reading! I had started it before I left home and did not bring it with me, thinking it was too “heavy” to read while traveling (even though it is a small book). Once in Ireland, however, I was inspired to read it so went to a bookstore and bought another copy. It was just what the Divine Doctor had ordered.

I said at the outset of this report that when I lived in Ireland before, I experienced life there as richer and deeper, but also more painful, than life in the United States. I wondered if I would still experience that on this trip. I concluded that that experience was partly a result of my having been in my early twenties when I lived there, and partly was true to Ireland. On this trip, I saw what led to that initial experience, in part: an intensity of personality among many of the people. Ireland did not disappoint in that it is still full of characters, any of whom, as Kirk said, is worthy of a novel on any given day.

To me, the most significant thing I have learned from my sabbatical as I near its end is, in fact, of a spiritual nature: to be aware of what floats around in my mind when my thoughts are not occupied with something specific. A book I read several years ago first brought my attention to this issue: Brian Mahan, in *Forgetting Ourselves on Purpose*, suggests that the reader note what thoughts distract him or her while reading the book. He writes,

Whenever you stop reading unintentionally..., make a note of whatever it was you were thinking when you first noticed that you were no longer reading. If the unintentional lapse is more than momentary, retrace the conversation as far back as you can and take notes on what you find. The idea here is simply to trick yourself into discovering what you think about, what you’re in fact preoccupied with, by catching yourself in an otherwise unmonitored moment of reverie and daydreaming.<sup>7</sup>

When I read the book, I was intrigued by this suggestion, followed it while I read the book, and have occasionally thought of it since then.

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<sup>7</sup> Brian J. Mahan, *Forgetting Ourselves on Purpose: Vocation and the Ethics of Ambition*. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002), p. 34

On the trip to Ireland, however, and once I returned home, I began to note the general tenor of my thoughts while at rest, or the thoughts that distracted me during prayer. For example, with nothing specific to occupy my time, what were my first thoughts upon awaking? Kirk and I have often commented about visitors to Hawai'i, especially when we have seen one "stressing out," that being here, in a place known as paradise, can force people to confront whatever is bothering them. If you cannot enjoy yourself here, then you have brought your problems with you.

A similar thought struck me in Ireland, especially once we arrived in Glencolmcille. It was a beautiful place, with pleasant people; it was remote, with no distractions (no Internet access and one television station); and our time was completely our own. I thoroughly enjoyed being there, but by then I had already started to note certain unhelpful tendencies in the pattern of my thoughts.

One of them is a tendency I have noted before as an occupational hazard among priests: to be focused on oneself. "It's not about you," the saying goes; but the personhood of the priest is enough a part of our toolbox that we can fall into the trap of focusing on ourselves, either thinking how well we are doing (how virtuous, how holy, etc.) or repeatedly castigating ourselves with guilt. During a CREDO II retreat I attended in May 2009, the staff told the participants after several days, "You all are carrying too much around with you. Just let it go." Self-aggrandizement, self-reproach, and even self-consciousness are still all about the self. When I detected myself falling into any of these tendencies, especially to applaud myself or to castigate myself, I began to say to myself, "It's not about you" and to pray.

In conclusion, what I learned on sabbatical, in addition to various practical matters about ordination and ministry, can best be summarized in the words of the Apostle Paul:

*Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.*

*[Philippians 4:4-8]*