



IRELAND YEARLY MEETING RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Quaker House Dublin, Stocking Lane, Dublin, D16 V3F8

Phone/Answering – 01 4998003

e-mail – office@quakers.ie

30th April 2019

To Friends Everywhere,

We send warm greetings from Ireland Yearly Meeting, held from 25th - 28th April 2019 at the High School, Rathgar, Dublin.

The theme of our Yearly Meeting has been "Education", a theme well suited to our venue and to the enrichment we have received from over 20 international Friends. But the worship, talks, discussions and lectures remind us above all that we must be a learning community of Friends. We must explore new ideas and seek the truth together, challenging ourselves and finding new ways to live. We must understand not just the world, but we must understand the heart and the imperative of love.

In this our discussions have reminded us that Jesus is the great teacher, throwing out challenging questions while guiding us through the parable stories to a radical new life. He teaches us the need to go beyond rule-based morality to a deeper, unconditional love. We were reminded by Noah Merrill in our Public Lecture that "teaching is about bringing forth what lies within". What must keep us going is our need to understand and be connected to the infinite love of God.

This need for us to educate and to transform ourselves has also been clear as we have explored how we hold our vision of a world at peace, not just globally but in the life of our island. We are being educated in particular by our young people as they challenge us, in new and imaginative ways, to face the ecological crisis which requires us to act now. At the same time we have been reminded by our Junior Yearly Meeting of the importance of forgiveness as a way of resolving conflict.

We have also considered the educational role of our schools, in Ireland and overseas, and the opportunities they provide to spread our experience and change lives. But we also must ensure that our Meetings and family life support our young people to grow spiritually. We have been excited by the diverse and challenging opportunity that our young people have taken up during the year to work and develop together, including their work with refugees in Greece. So too we have reflected on our own formation as Friends through discussion and training courses, deepening our understanding of the roots of our Quaker faith.

In all this we have had a real sense of faith, hope and of joy. The power of committed individuals and small groups, challenging injustice and deprivation, caring for the sick and the lonely has been repeatedly demonstrated. We have been privileged to hear about the work of our services at Bloomfield, caring for those experiencing mental illness, just as we have learnt of the transformation of the lives of young girls saved from prostitution by the vision and work of two Indian Friends. The regular sharing of meals with asylum seekers by Friends in Killarney reminds us of the importance of simple actions, teaching and transforming us as they help transform the world.

We go from our Meeting knowing that now is the time for each of us to educate ourselves, commit ourselves to our faith and to act.

E Heather Bewley – Clerk

William A Haire – Assistant Clerk

Anne Goggin – Assistant Clerk

Pauline Goggin – Epistle Assistant



**IRELAND YEARLY MEETING
RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS**

Quaker House Dublin, Stocking Lane, Dublin, D16 V3F8

Phone/Answering – 01 4998003

e-mail – office@quakers.ie