

The Irish Catholic

A Gift

that endures

Autumn Legacy Supplement



**“All I kept thinking was...
this room is saving me.”**

The pandemic might feel like a distant memory to many of us now, but for people like Kara, who lost someone she loves to Covid — its impact is still raw and very real.

“My mother was 75, but she was young at heart,” says Kara with love in her voice as she remembers her mam, Margaret. It’s three years ago now since she died. But if you’ve ever lost someone you adore, you’ll know it feels like both an eternity and no time at all.

No visiting allowed

“She had a bad fall and was rushed to hospital at the height of Covid,” says Kara. It was an agonising time because no visitors were allowed. “I got to visit her on Christmas Day for a few minutes wearing full PPE, and then not again until the day before she died,” says Kara. “It was one of the longest and most difficult times in my life.”

It was then that a nurse told Kara they had an end-of-life suite waiting for her and her mother. It was the generosity of our supporters that made this small mercy possible.



“This lovely room was made possible by Irish Hospice Foundation. It has wallpaper with little birds on it, low lighting, less medical equipment... I’d heard of people standing outside of windows or waiting in cars as family members were dying, so I was very grateful to have this beautiful room.”
- Kara

Sanctuary & solace

The end-of-life suite available to Kara and her mother that night is one of more than 44 rooms like it across 26 hospitals in Ireland. These rooms are transformed into sacred spaces of sanctuary and solace as part of our Design and Dignity programme run in partnership with HSE Estates. They are places fragile hearts can find care and comfort during the most private moments of their lives.

“This room was made possible by Irish Hospice Foundation,” says Kara. And even though Covid parted Kara and her mam in their final days, this room meant she was as close and comfortable as she could possibly be.

Vital programmes such as Design and Dignity grant people the mercy of a private space to be alone with the person they love in those final moments. With 44% of people dying in hospitals every year, a gift in your will to Irish Hospice Foundation can help support our vision that every hospital across Ireland has a

dignified and comfortable sanctuary to experience the death of a loved one. A place where bad news can be broken sensitively or families can gather together in peace and privacy. A place where people can die wrapped in a circle of their family’s love. You can bring comfort, compassion and care to people like Kara when the person they love is slipping away...

A gift of any amount in your will to Irish Hospice Foundation could be the easiest and most meaningful one you ever make. It is a way of enabling you to continue to support our work beyond your lifetime. By remembering us in your will you can help us make long-term plans in support of end-of-life and bereavement care across Ireland, including Design and Dignity and Nurses for Night Care Service. On behalf of those facing death and grief, thank you for your consideration.

To find out more about including a gift in your will to Irish Hospice Foundation, contact Anna Sadlier in confidence at 01 679 3188 or email anna.sadlier@hospicefoundation.ie

“Everything is connected”: changing future generations’ fate with today’s farming techniques

Rising temperatures, endless droughts and devastating floods – an unrelenting cycle of extreme weather is pushing communities in Malawi into deadly hunger. But thanks to innovative new climate-smart farming techniques, local farmers can protect their families and livelihoods from the catastrophic effects of the climate crisis for years to come.

In the Neno District of Malawi, farmer and father, Kosimasi has been struggling with the increasing consequences of climate change for many years. Unprecedented levels of rainfall have eroded the land and swept away his fishing ponds – the source of his family’s food, income and security for the future. Poverty and the growing risk of life-threatening hunger became a terrifying reality.

Adapt, rebuild, thrive

Kosimasi knows that the rains will continue to come, and the land that generations of his family have relied on for their livelihood will continue to erode, with devastating impacts.

But with support, his whole community is now beginning to build resilience, and overcome the catastrophic effects of climate change. Kosimasi says, “We learned from Concern Worldwide that nature has changed and we should change our farms.”

Having worked in Malawi for 21 years, Concern’s climate-smart agriculture programmes have taught local farmers new irrigation methods and farming techniques, like how to dig swales and stabilise



Kosimasi, a fish farmer, stands in front of a pond in Samu village, Malawi, where he and his community are fighting the terrible effects of climate change. Photo: Chris Gagnon/Concern Worldwide

“Everything is connected. We are using the fish pond to irrigate our crops on the land, and we are using the same crops to make the feed for the fish. We are not devastating the environment, we are busy taking care of the environment.”

Kosimasi, Malawi

dams, to improve rainwater run-off. Essential tools, such as water drums and slashers, as well as solar panels, are helping to protect crops from soil erosion, increase harvest yields, and offer new opportunities for climate-resilient farming. By working with the environment, Kosimasi is building a positive, lasting connection between the land and the families that rely on it for food.



In the past, the ponds Kosimasi and other farmers worked on would be swept away by flooding. Photo: Chris Gagnon/Concern Worldwide

A global connection

Unfortunately, Kosimasi’s story is an all too familiar one. Around the world, millions of people are being impacted by changes to the climate and environment. In Malawi, where the land supports 80% of the population’s livelihoods, climate shocks such as floods and droughts are pushing people to the brink of survival.

Here in Ireland, the effects of the climate crisis are starting to become more evident, with increased rainfall and flooding. But in Malawi, where farmers like Kosimasi are on the climate frontline, adverse changes in climate are severely disrupting the natural balance of seasons that farmers have relied on for generations. Consecutive harvests are being destroyed, giving families no time to recover and no relief from the devastation.

As experts warn that more intense and more frequent droughts, floods

THE LASTING LEGACY OF TOOLS AND TRAINING

Through the generosity of legacy donors, Concern Worldwide is able to support vulnerable communities now and for years to come with the vital tools and training they need.



TECHNOLOGY

Rather than irrigating land by hand with buckets and cans, farmers can use solar powered water pumps and save time for other vital tasks.



IRRIGATION

Through innovative irrigation training, such as how to dig swales to protect dams, farmers can continue to grow crops, even during droughts.



TRAINING

With support, farmers are trained in organic fertiliser-making – a sustainable way to grow crops multiple times a year, with readily available products.

A growing impact

“Everything is connected,” Kosimasi beams, as he explains how he was able to make fertiliser for the beds of his fishing ponds. His ponds keep the land irrigated with nutrient-packed water, which helps to grow maize used to make fish feed. These new techniques have also meant Kosimasi can sell his fish and harvests at market, raising an income to build a new house for his family, and send his daughters to school. And, most importantly, his family is no longer hungry thanks to their improved diets.

A powerful and sustainable way to support Malawi is with a gift in your Will.

Through support from Irish donors, almost 40 farmers are now dedicated to conserving the Sayamika river and surrounding land, which means Kosimasi’s whole community is no longer at risk of deadly hunger.

A lasting legacy

For many of Ireland’s most compassionate people, playing a part in protecting the lives of future generations starts with leaving a gift in their Will. A crucial source of support, this life-saving gesture can give communities the training and tools they need to recover and adapt – and connect us all to a brighter future.

While climate change might be inevitable, through one act of kindness – choosing to leave a gift in your Will – you can make an extraordinary change. By leaving a legacy, you can help ensure every one has the tools and support they need to fight the effects of the climate crisis, so they can thrive in a world without hunger.

Discover how you can support families to adapt and survive. Together, we can fight for a future without deadly hunger.

“That my support will help create incredible change, even when I’m gone, makes me so proud.”

Eileen, Co. Limerick

Learn how you can help to protect families against climate change

To receive your free brochure about leaving a gift in your Will to Concern, please contact Siobhan O’Connor today.

Phone: 01 417 8020 E-mail: siobhan.oconnor@concern.net

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Creating the answer to hunger with food security



Drastic droughts are causing hugely challenging conditions for farmers and communities in Africa, which charity Concern are tackling, writes **Chai Brady**

Many Europeans have seen the devastating impacts of climate change on their own continent, with summer conflagrations regularly on the news.

This may bring home the fact that climate change is driving – to the extreme – crop insecurity in hard-hit regions of Africa more than ever before.

Some of the worst impacts have been witnessed in the Sahel region, which is the group of countries just below the Sahara Desert, including Chad, Niger and Burkina Faso – where Concern works. They have also seen disastrous impacts in the Horn of Africa.

Speaking to *The Irish Catholic*, Reka Sztopa of Concern, the regional director for West Africa and Sahel, said that regions under her purview have been “badly impacted” by climate change.

She said: “In these areas most people are living in rural areas and they’re almost 100% dependent, for both for income and food, on what they grow. They’re very limited in terms of agriculture, irrigation and water supply, and so they rely very, very heavily on rain-fed agriculture.

Climate

“We’re seeing the impacts of climate change in terms of shortened or very unpredictable rainy seasons where farmers don’t know when they should plant seeds or sometimes there are long periods of drought. For example, the Horn of Africa had five consecutive years of drought

where basically there were no rains and then on the other side sometimes the rains would come too soon or too heavily and there is flooding, crops are lost, houses are lost, it also leads to soil erosion so it’s really this unpredictable rainfall and the lack of ability to water and irrigate crops in a different way,” Ms Sztopa said.

“This could include introducing seeds that either mature faster, so they can deal with a shorter or unpredictable rainy period, or seeds that have been adapted to be drought or flood resistant”

Despite the gargantuan task in assisting those struggling with unpredictable climate patterns, Concern is trying to fortify communities with long-term methods to endure and prosper despite sustained periods of hardship.

Successful

One the methods is called ‘Climate Smart Agriculture’. Ms Sztopa said it has been very successful.

Explaining the concept, she said that Climate Smart Agriculture is just a number of actions in which the charity engage communities in order to help them deal with the unpredictable climate. This could include introducing seeds that either mature faster, so they can deal with a shorter or unpredictable rainy period, or seeds that have been adapted to be drought or flood resistant.

Ms Sztopa said: “We also encourage people to decrease the tillage, so that we’re preserving the soil structure and retaining moisture and as many nutrients as possible in the soil because in many areas people traditionally would use a burning method where they would burn the land and that would release ash into the soil. This obviously leads to loss of forest and vegetation cover and in the long term really degrades the soil so we work with communities to encourage better soil management.”

The charity would also promote and provide trees that are good fruit crops but also help to enrich the soil in agricultural areas, while at the same time providing shade as well as defending against the wind. Overall they help retain moisture in the soil.

“Another thing that we do is work with communities and farmers on how to conserve their food stock: how to store seeds or how to process their harvests to avoid it deteriorating which can happen when there is long periods of rain, for example, and moisture



Climate-Smart Agriculture techniques have allowed people in Niger like Halou Alti have been able to produce crops for more than four years.

gets in to the seeds,” Ms Sztopa said.

“So it’s really a whole series of actions that we take, working together with communities and farmers on things that are adapted specifically to the crops that they grow and the environment that they’re growing them in to make sure that they have the maximum possible yield of their harvest.”

Giving Niger, where the charity has worked for 20 years, as a case study, she said: “A lot of farming communities have been able to double and sometimes triple the yield of certain staple crops in the country within the communities they work.

Gardening

“The charity has introduced

vegetable gardening, which is adapted to very dry areas, so instead of big plots of vegetables they encourage ‘sack gardening’ where vegetables are grown around the household and can be watered with ‘grey water’ from the kitchen and this can help increase nutritional diversity and have fruits and vegetables in the off-season and in-between.”

To make these programmes possible, Concern has highlighted the importance of the continued reception of legacy gifts which are “invaluable contributions”. Regardless of their monetary value, each legacy donation plays a vital role in enabling the charity to continue its work, especially in developing Climate Smart Agriculture, in the most

impoverished regions until the day their services are no longer required.

For Ms Sztopa, she said: “In terms of legacy giving, I think that the support to Concern to run our programmes in areas like the Sahel and the Horn of Africa is very dependent on the Irish public to help us with that work, and to expand and to be able to reach people in other areas who maybe don’t have that support at that moment.”

She added that if the charity made no intervention in the areas in which it works, “we would be seeing a much larger number of people in crisis or in food insecurity... that means people are going more than a day without eating anything”.



Leaving a gift to Misean Cara in your Will can help Irish missionaries reach the poorest and most vulnerable people overseas.



Photo by Paul Jeffrey

In 2022, Misean Cara supported missionaries in reaching 1.7 million people in 53 countries with livelihoods training, quality education, access to healthcare, protection of human rights and emergency humanitarian response.

A gift in your Will can help ensure the legacy of Irish missionaries continues for decades to come.



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Contact Jennifer at **01 405 5028** to learn more about leaving a gift to Misean Cara, or email **info@miseancara.ie**
www.miseancara.ie

Missionaries' support 'fundamental' to developing strong communities



Missionary support to developing communities is very important, Sr Josephine McCarthy tells **Ruadhán Jones**

Whether it be in health, education or sustainable farming, the support offered by missionaries is fundamentally important to developing communities, says Sr Josephine McCarthy PBVM

"Missionaries are extremely well placed to know what's needed on the ground because they're there among the people, some of their members are local young men and women," says Sr McCarthy, who spent many years on mission in Africa.

That's why legacy donations to Misean Cara, a non-profit organisation that works directly with missionaries, is "money well spent", she continues.

"Every single penny of the donation goes to the actual people that the missionaries are serving," says the Irish nun, who serves on the board of Misean Cara. "It's invested in projects on the ground."

Nurturing

Missionaries are of course involved in nurturing Catholic communities, "but all the development work they do is non-denominational", she adds. "They work with everyone."

Missionaries are involved in a variety of projects in health, education and sustainable development, to name but a few. In each area, their goal is to develop local leadership and self-sustaining local communities.

"The modern theory of development is that we should be supporting local autonomy and local leadership and missionaries are ideally placed to support local initiatives to nurture and develop those local leaders," Sr McCarthy explains.

"Handouts are very temporary, but if you develop local leadership and you develop self-sustaining local communities, then that's much more long term than handing out some funding in a short term way".

In terms of sustainable farming, for instance, many communities have native practices and know-how, but they need support to develop them.

"The mantra of missionaries has always been to work themselves out of a job – in other words to build up schools that would be self-sustainable that people can take over," says Sr McCarthy.

Education is a key area on which



At the St Daniel Comboni Hospital in Wau, South Sudan, midwife Roseline Edwards Anthony examines the newborn sons of mother Alek Kual. Roseline is a graduate of the Catholic Health Training Institute (CHTI), run by Solidarity with South Sudan in partnership with the Faithful Companions of Jesus, who receive funding for the project through Misean Cara. Photo: Paul Jeffrey

missionaries focus, as "everybody, no matter where you are in the world, knows that education is the door out of poverty," Sr McCarthy asserts.

“You’re there standing with people while they find their voices and advocate for housing, education and that way you build up local leadership”

"For instance, one of our sisters in Zambia would have started a school with a small number of students under a palm tree. Now it's a huge school with a thousand students and the government are paying salaries."

"That's the kind of progression you want to see, sustainable progression going forward."

What makes missionaries so fundamental to the development of developing communities is that they are there long term, Sr McCarthy explains.

"I worked in Peru and in Ecuador – you're there among the people. When people are talking about those I lived with, I say that if they had no water then I had no water either," she says.

"You're there, you're sharing their problems, you're not doing for people and you're not taking a lead. But you're there standing with people while they find their voices and advocate for housing, education and that way you

build up local leadership."

As someone who worked on the ground for 20 years and who is now back in Ireland, to see the wonderful work that missionaries do is incredible, Sr McCarthy continues.

Incredible

"It is incredible the work they do with a small amount of money. That's what blows my mind. While they may get money for one project, then they are able to support that project with volunteers – missionaries all work on a voluntary basis... They can ensure it's followed up, that it's not short term. Missionaries are on the ground, able to see that it's continued if you like. Sometimes there's short term funding for something, but if you get a legacy, you can continue that project."

What makes legacy donations so important to this vital work is that, unlike other kinds of funding, it's not tied to a particular type of project.

"Some funding is tied to a particular project," Sr McCarthy says. "But you see a need that is immediate, for instance the flooding in Pakistan recently and thousands of people lost their houses, several of the missionary groups were able to jump in immediately with housing, with people to get alternative accommodation to help kids get to school. Those kinds of areas where they're able to jump in immediately and help people."



Misean Cara has supported the Bauleni Special Needs Project (BSNP), run by the Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, since 2012, helping it to grow into a recognised Centre of Excellence for inclusive, special needs education in Zambia serving more than 1,400 students with intellectual and physical disabilities. Photo: Moses Mtonga

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To find out more about Our Lady's Hospice & Care Services or to discuss the simple steps involved in leaving a gift, big or small, please contact us in complete confidence, with no obligation.

Thank you.



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50 years of Trócaire: How the support of the people of Ireland has changed the lives of millions.

Fifty years ago, the Irish people were stirred into action by devastating scenes of famine and flooding in Bangladesh they were seeing on their TV screens. They responded with incredible generosity, donating £250,000 to the Catholic Church to deliver life-saving aid.

Trócaire

TOGETHER FOR A JUST WORLD

This outpouring of kindness inspired the Church to establish an organisation to support people living in the world's poorest regions. In February 1973, Trócaire was born.

The Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Ireland establishing Trócaire said the aim of the organisation was to be two-fold. "Abroad it will give whatever help lies within its resources to the areas of greatest need among developing countries. At home it will try to make us all more aware of the needs of these countries and of our duties towards them. These duties are no longer a matter of charity – but of simple justice."

Working on this dual mandate Trócaire – with the support of Parishes throughout Ireland – has changed the lives of tens of millions of people all over the world over the last five decades. Its annual Lenten appeal sees the iconic Trócaire Box displayed in hundreds of thousands of schools, churches and homes in the buildup to the greatest celebration in the Catholic church, Easter.

It has also been vocal over the last half a century in speaking-up on behalf of oppressed and marginalised people. Today, Trócaire works with local partners in the world's most at-risk communities and with people in Ireland to tackle the underlying causes of poverty and injustice – and to respond to the crises they create. Last year, Trócaire improved the lives of 1.58million people in 23 of the most fragile countries in the world. Together it is still bringing about positive and lasting change for a just world.

Trócaire's mandate was put into action not long after it was established as it campaigned against apartheid in South Africa. Years later, Nelson Mandela thanked Trócaire: "South Africans have a long association with Trócaire, who have not only been staunch opponents of apartheid but have also initiated and supported projects in South Africa since 1977."

The 1970s saw brutal conflict in Latin America. Trócaire's response to violations in Chile, Nicaragua and El Salvador defined its commitment to justice work.

In El Salvador, the violent repression of farmers, students and church leaders by death squads acting under President

Arturo Molina's government drew Trócaire into one of the most dangerous emergency-relief programmes in its history.

While conflict took hold of Central American states in the 1980s, public attention shifted to Ethiopia, where famine killed almost one million people in 1984. Irish people donated £11.8 million to relieve famine in Ethiopia and the surrounding countries. Ever since, Trócaire has been able to work alongside its local partners in Ethiopia, such as Sr Medhin of the Daughters of Charity in Tigray to address the causes of poverty, as well as its impact on people's lives.



Sister Medhin Tesfay (centre of pic holding child) is the Regional Coordinator for Social and Development Programmes with the Sisters of Charity in Mekele, Ethiopia.

At the time it was said that a famine this vicious could never happen again. But in Somalia, conflict and collapse of state institutions in 1991 led to a widespread crisis, with millions of people suffering from hunger, disease and displacement. There was no government, no local organisations, no infrastructure and a total collapse of institutions.

Trócaire launched a £1million appeal for the Somali people and the funds raised allowed the organisation to support local people to rebuild clinics, schools and water sources.

Today, Trócaire is known

as the 'mother of Gedo' and provides critical health, humanitarian assistance, education and livelihood support to more than a quarter of a million people in Somalia every year. As the only international NGO to have remained in the Gedo region throughout its 30 years of insecurity and conflict. If Trócaire weren't there, countless children, who received treatment, would have died. Thousands would not be in school.

In September 2022, in Dollow Health Referral Centre run by Trócaire in Somalia, I spoke with a mother who had just arrived with a critically ill baby. The infant girl was given the very best of care by our health team. But she died within two days. I will never forget that mother's grief. Unfortunately, this is just one tragic story of many this year from Somalia and the Horn of Africa where a devastating hunger crisis, following years of drought fuelled by climate change, has caused extreme, life-threatening hunger for more than 20 million people. I am grateful however, that thousands of severely malnourished children have passed through our clinics and been discharged, healthy and strong, into the arms of their loving families.

In Rwanda 2003 at least 800,000 Tutsis and thousands of Hutus were killed by Hutu extremists in the Genocide. Trócaire was inspired by the determination of Rwandan people to pick up the pieces of their broken country and £6million was raised to help the country rebuild.

Trócaire and its local partners developed projects in agriculture, health, trauma-counselling, education, community development and women's empowerment. Its medical programme served 200,000 people in southwest Rwanda.

In the new millennium, Trócaire joined the Jubilee 2000



Showing all the countries Trócaire has operated in over the last 50 years is Caoimhe de Barra, CEO of Trócaire, to Mohamed Mohamud Nuh from Gedo, Somalia, Trócaire's latest volunteer, and Lía López Blanco.

campaign which led to reductions in debt for some of the poorest countries. But several catastrophic natural disasters reminded the world of their vulnerability.

On St Stephen's Day 2004, the Asian tsunami killed over 250,000 people. Over the course of one-month Trócaire received a phenomenal €27million in public donations.

A new issue also influenced Trócaire's work at the start of the new millennium and continues today – climate change. Communities were struggling to grow food in increasingly drought-prone conditions. Rainy seasons were becoming shorter and dry seasons longer.

Much of Trócaire's work today involves working with rural communities to develop ways to cultivate their parched land, while demanding that rich industrial countries acknowl-

edge their responsibility for the problem, and provide funding for climate-related loss and damage.

Trócaire's history is owned by the people in Ireland who together for 50 years have devoted unyielding solidarity to those who are suffering in our world.

It is also owned by our brave partner organisations overseas, who are at the centre of positive change for their communities. Trócaire's vision of a fairer world and determination to tackle the drivers of poverty and injustice are as strong and relevant as ever. Our world has changed since Trócaire's foundation in 1973, and so have we. But we remain rooted in the values that shape us and in our belief that a more just and sustainable world is possible.

Written by Caoimhe de Barra, CEO of Trócaire



Lía López Blanco (7) from Guatemala and Nelson Ogunsanya (10) from Dublin pictured at the launch of Trócaire's annual Lenten appeal as the charity marks their 50th Anniversary this year.

It's been said that if your name is held in the hearts of others, you will never truly die.

When you set aside a gift of any size in your Will to Trócaire, your good and generous name will never die.

Every year after your passing, we'll honour your name in gratitude and love at a special Remembrance Mass where all faiths are welcome.

We'll keep your name safe and warm in our Books of Remembrance, too, where all the people who've loved you can come to see it.

Simple bequests of any size by Will are some of the greatest,

most everlasting gifts of all made by caring people just like you across Ireland.

So whether you ultimately include Trócaire in your final legacy – *or another worthy cause* – we have a free and easy planner you can bring to your solicitor to get started. We're happy to post it to you, discreetly, and with our heartfelt thanks for your consideration and for being a faithful Irish Catholic reader.

For the relief your legacy will bring to people living in fear from poverty, injustice,

indifference, and exploitation worldwide, we believe that even though you pass on, your good name should never die.

Request your free and confidential legacy planner from Trócaire today. Then bring the planner to your family solicitor for an open and honest conversation.

We'll remember your name.

Trócaire
TOGETHER FOR A JUST WORLD

To request your free legacy planner now, including bequest wording and a simple 4-step worksheet you can share privately with your solicitor, ring Grace Kelly on 01 5053 221, or email grace.kelly@trocaire.org

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hospitals and laughter may
very well be the best medicine.”*



Barretstown Founder,
Paul Newman

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BARRETSTOWN
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BRENDA'S STORY

Leaving a legacy of magic behind!

Brenda is a paediatric nurse practitioner who since 1997 has been making the epic journey from Seattle in the United States to our campus in Co. Kildare to volunteer at The Med Shed for summer camps at Barretstown. She spoke to us about why she's decided to leave a gift in her Will to make sure the Serious Fun and magic of camp lives on.



Where the magic began...

It was back in 1995 or 1996, when I was nursing in paediatric oncology that I first met a nurse who'd spent a summer at Barretstown. Her experiences inspired me to get in touch with the Care Coordinator at the time. And in the Summer of 1997, I embarked on my first trip to volunteer at camp.

That was it. I was hooked. And have been coming back, to help at the Med-Shed ever since.

It's an epic journey. One year, from the time I left the red door at the castle, to turning the key in my door in Seattle, it was 23.5 hours! But it was worth it. It always is.

You come to camp to help, but you end up getting so much more than you give.

A million little reasons...

When asked why I do it – what my favourite thing is – there's no one reason.

It's a million little ones that combine to create this truly magical experience, that will forever hold a piece of my heart and soul.

There's the setting of the magical medieval castle. The country of Ireland and its incredible people. And the unbelievable staff and volunteers in Barretstown.

You feel the best of humanity. People from all over the world who give up a week of their time to put on funny clothes and costumes, paint their faces and wear their clothes backwards – to do whatever it takes to make a child smile.

But most of all, it's the honour and privilege of hearing the laughter for yourself. Being one of the lucky few, to see the magic in action first-hand.

Leaving a legacy of magic behind...

It was a few years ago now, filling in details for an insurance policy at work, that I first thought about leaving something behind me for Barretstown. I've no children myself and I couldn't think of a better place for a legacy gift to go.

Since then, I've added another policy. And made Barretstown one of the main beneficiaries of my overall estate in my will too.

It means a lot to think I'll be helping camps happen long past when I'm not able to come to them physically. To know I'll still be able to help a child get back a part of their childhood again.

And I'd love, if in some small way, sharing my story today inspires someone else to think about leaving a gift too.



LIKE TO LEAVE A LEGACY?

If you'd like to find out more about leaving a gift in your will, you can contact Clare by emailing...

clare.martin@barrestown.org or calling 045 864115



If you would like to learn
more visit www.lauralynn.ie
or email
rrowan@lauralynn.ie

Plant a seed for LauraLynn.

Remember LauraLynn in your Will and help
us continue to care and support children
with life-limiting conditions and their
families.



LauraLynn
IRELAND'S CHILDREN'S HOSPICE



Leaving a gift in your Will to LauraLynn, Ireland's Children's Hospice will help ensure children with life-limiting conditions and their families continue to get care and support in the future.

LauraLynn is Ireland's only Children's Hospice, providing hospice, palliative care and support for children with life-limiting conditions and their families from all across Ireland. Now in its 12th year the Children's Hospice provides symptom management, planned short breaks, emergency, and end-of-life care to children with life-limiting conditions as well as family supports and bereavement care.

LauraLynn Hospice is based in Dublin with a community team providing care in the home and community across Leinster, Cork, Kerry and Limerick.

LauraLynn's holistic approach to care ensures they support the whole family, enabling patients to be children and parents to have time to be Mums and

Dads rather than full-time carers. All LauraLynn services are provided free to families.

Ruth Rowan Special Gifts Manager at LauraLynn said: "Making your Will is one of the most personal and inspiring decisions you will ever make. It's a reflection of your life and values; the people that matter to you and what you want to live on for future generations. Remembering LauraLynn with a gift of any size is a wonderful way for you to care for children with life-limiting conditions beyond your lifetime.

"Your caring nature, your deep love for children, and your compassion for families who are going through the toughest journey of their lives. These are the qualities I believe all those that

support LauraLynn share. By including LauraLynn in your Will, you are ensuring that these qualities are never forgotten, even after you have gone."

If you would like to find out more and talk with someone in confidence about a gift in your Will please call Ruth Rowan, Special Gifts Manager at LauraLynn on **01 2893151** or email **rrowan@lauralynn.ie**



For more information see <https://www.lauralynn.ie/howx-to-help/gift-in-will>

Come for “Tea and a Tour” of Merchants Quay Ireland

There's nothing like seeing first-hand how your kindness works to help people at their darkest time. Bring a guest (or two!) for a behind-the-scenes tour of MQI's Riverbank homeless drop-in centre next to Adam and Eve's Church on Merchants Quay.

It's a quiet time after breakfast has been served, no clients are at MQI's Riverbank Centre for a short while. So, it's an ideal window of time to come for a cup of tea, tour the building and meet MQI staff.

We'd love you to hear the success stories – because lives can be changed. Homelessness doesn't have to be a dead-end.

To attend the next monthly tour please RSVP by ringing **01-5240139**. Spaces are limited!



A gift in your Will to Merchants Quay Ireland can be lifesaving.

Every day, hundreds of men and women with nowhere else to turn, come to Merchants Quay Ireland for a hot meal, a shower, health care and counselling support. More and more people are suffering and in crisis.

A gift in your Will, in any amount, can do so much good.

You can decide on a specific amount, or you can name a percentage of what's left after taking care of your loved ones.

Even 1% is enough to change lives for the better.

All your solicitor will need is this:

Merchants Quay Ireland of 24
Merchants Quay, Dublin 8
Registered Charity Number 20026240
Charity Number CHY10311



“Knowing I’ve done something, just my own little bit... it gives me such a warm feeling inside.”

- Legacy supporter with Merchants Quay Ireland



Meet legacies manager, Emma Murphy

I'm here to help if you have any questions at all. Just get in touch with me, confidentially at **01-5240965** or **emma.murphy@mqi.ie** and I'll be happy to help.

MQI

Merchants Quay Ireland
Homeless & Drugs Services



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I hope it. I Will it.

Our free resources will make leaving
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A gift that lives on

What difference will you make?

Every hour someone in Ireland suffers from a stroke. Every day, hundreds of people are diagnosed with heart disease. Causing devastation and impacting too many lives.

By leaving a gift to the Irish Heart Foundation in your Will, large or small, you can make a real and lasting difference to the lives of people affected by heart disease and stroke. With your help we can continue to save lives, transform recovery, promote health, campaign and advocate.

A gift in your Will is a simple and powerful way to provide ongoing support to the causes closest to your heart, and an opportunity to say that you believe in a future where no hearts are broken by preventable heart disease and stroke.

Please join our fight for every heartbeat in Ireland. To find out more about leaving a life-saving gift in your Will to the Irish Heart Foundation, please contact **Alice Sachova** on **01 6685001**, or email **asachova@irishheart.ie** in confidence.

THANK YOU

Irish Heart Foundation, 17-19 Rathmines Road Lower, Dublin 6, D06 C780

☎ 01 668 5001

✉ info@irishheart.ie

🌐 irishheart.ie

Charity Registration No.: Chy5507 Charities Regulator Registration No.: 20008376



Protecting children's hearts from junk food marketing is essential, **Chai Brady** hears

Irish people are now living longer than ever before due to advances in medical science and technology as well as better health education, but this does not come without its challenges.

Over the decades more health problems will arise and need to be tackled quickly as people enter their golden years. A 'silent killer' that so often goes unnoticed, as it can have no symptoms, is high blood pressure. It can be treated with lifestyle changes and often medication, but without intervention the situation can deteriorate quickly.

Defending and preserving Irish hearts for decades

Recognising this, the Irish Heart Foundation are continuing a campaign focused on raising awareness of the dangers of high blood pressure, both through information campaigns, advocacy and heart health checks, particularly in disadvantaged communities.

Speaking to *The Irish Catholic*, Janis Morrissey, Director of Health Promotion, Information and Training at the Irish Heart Foundation said: "The demand for heart health checks across communities is very strong, and we have a team of nurses who travel the country offering these checks.

"We have identified a lot of high-risk individuals and referred them on to their GP but there are occasions where we need to call an ambulance because somebody's blood pressure is so high that they're at immediate risk and it's an emergency situation. It is a very impactful service to be offering," she said.

Ms Morrissey said intervening at a young age is crucial as 80% of heart disease and stroke is

preventable but children may not be equipped to understand good health advice or even follow it because of conditions at home. Currently the Irish Heart Foundation are developing a World Health Organisation (WHO) project around 'health literacy'.

"We do a lot of work, particularly with DEIS [Delivering Equality of opportunity In Schools], with schools in disadvantaged areas to build life skills, educating around heart health. But we take an approach of building skills around understanding health information and how to analyse it and understand it and apply it in your own life as well," she explained.

CPR

Another aspect of the Irish Heart Foundation's outreach to schools is their CPR (Cardiopulmonary resuscitation) 4 Schools programme which the charity says is now in 86% of secondary schools across the country. This programme provides training in the life-saving skill of CPR, and the aim is to train the "next generation

of lifesavers" with the confidence to act in the event of a cardiac emergency, according to Ms Morrissey.

"We know that even by learning CPR once in your life you're 10 times more likely to respond to an emergency than someone who has never received training. Over 70% of cardiac arrests happen in the home, not in a public place, so the more people who learn CPR the better and we have a big focus on the quality of CPR generally," she said.

Stroke awareness

The charity also raises awareness of all aspects of cardiovascular disease. Do you know the F.A.S.T. signs of stroke? Facial weakness, Arm weakness, Speech problems, and Time to call 112 or 999 if you see any single one of these signs. Ms Morrissey says: "It's so important to have those symptoms at the front of the mind because as we say 'time is brain'. If people see a family member, friend or member of their community with even one of those signs, they must immediately call the emergency

services. Effective stroke treatment is hugely time dependent. The faster you act, the more of the person you can save."

Ms Morrissey added that they are extremely grateful to the Irish public whose donations make up 90% of the charity's running cost, with 10% coming from the State, saying "we heavily rely on the generosity of the public to do the work that we do".

Legacy donations are "an absolutely vital source of income" for the foundation. Legacy donations have been key when it comes to accelerating the programmes that are in place, as well as new initiatives, for example, one particularly significant gift allowed them to invest in protecting children's hearts from junk food marketing.



A gift in your will to COPE Galway is an offer of hope and a legacy of brighter tomorrows

Legacy giving is a powerful act that will leave a future of brighter tomorrows for the people in the Galway community affected by homelessness, domestic abuse and the challenges of older age.

Leaving a gift in your will to COPE Galway is one of the best ways to support our work in the local community. No matter the size of your gift, it will help improve the lives of some of the most isolated and vulnerable people in Galway.

At COPE Galway our vision is for a local community where every person is valued, cared for and supported at every stage of life. You can be confident that you'll be changing many lives by supporting our work.



COPE Galway

Charity No. 20011314 | CHY 6339

copegalway.ie/legacy

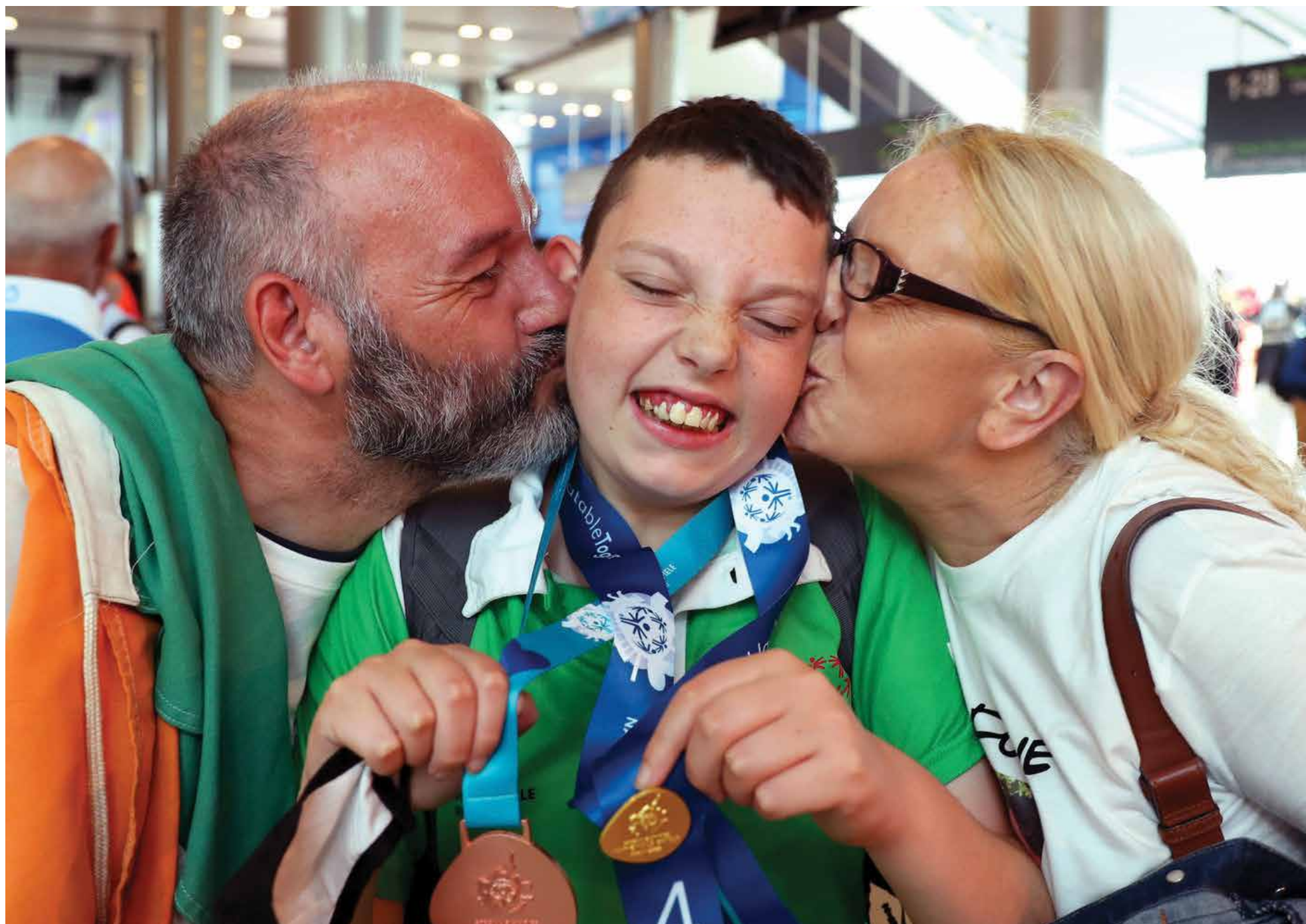
For more information, please contact Leonie at legacies@copegalway.ie or phone 091 778 750.

I want to give everyone the home that Cork has given me.

Join me in leaving a gift in your Will to Cork Simon Community.



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Special Olympics
Ireland



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and help transform the lives of athletes in your community.**

For more information contact Karen on **01 891 2005** or legacy@specialolympics.ie

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Leaving a sporting legacy to Special Olympics Ireland



Legacies help to provide sports, health, wellbeing and community for people with intellectual disabilities, writes **Jason Osborne**

You may remember the joyous scenes that graced our screens at the beginning of the summer, as Irish athletes took part in and returned home from the Special Olympics World Summer games 2023, which took place in Berlin.

Wonderful though the event was – and it was, for all 73 athletes, their coaches and their families and friends – the world games are but the cherry on top of an important and enduring body of work carried out by Special Olympics Ireland, CEO Matt English tells me. The organisation's key pillars are sports, health and wellbeing, athlete leadership and the young athlete programme.

"Special Olympics is a global organisation. In Special Olympics Ireland we offer a number of programmes. Whilst we are a charity and a disability organisation, we are first and foremost a sports organisation for people with an intellectual disability. Approximately two percent of the population have an intellectual disability and they have many more challenges in life across all spectrums," Mr English says.

To thrive

"Certainly their health and wellbeing and confidence would be lower than mainstream population and Special Olympics plays a huge, important part in giving them an environment to thrive, to grow in confidence, to gain respect and to belong."

Helping people with ID to get fit is very important, Mr English says, as many have underlying health conditions. As such, they focus, too, on the athletes health and wellbeing.

"We focus a lot on health and wellbeing as well, and this includes mental health for our athletes, but also we'd have various different programmes and workshops that athletes would go on, that local clubs would run and we facilitate the training and recruit volunteers that will run those health and wellbeing programmes.



Special Olympics CEO Matt English and Minister Thomas Byrne welcome Special Olympics athlete Declan Foley and others off of the plane from the world summer games in Berlin. Photos: Special Olympics Ireland



"It also includes doing various health assessments at various games, like the Berlin games, there would have been a healthy athlete programme, where everything from their eyesight to their hearing to their podiatry to their dentistry would have been checked and they would have given them tools for mindfulness and all of that to deal with stress," he says.

Families

The work Special Olympics Ireland carries out means a lot not just to the athletes, but to their families, too, and Mr English has personal experience of this, his brother, John, having had an intellectual disability.

"It's really important for the families as well. I had a brother with an intellectual disability as well and I saw how much sport meant to him. Sadly he passed away when he was 21, but he had a very good life and the whole family were very proud of

his achievements and Special Olympics in the early days was an important part of his life."

A wide variety of sports are on offer for those who choose to check Special Olympics out, with over 250 clubs across the island of Ireland and many different Olympic sports on offer between them.

"Athletes turn up and play a sport of their choice. Now, we can't offer every sport in every community, but some athletes are members of two or three different clubs because they want to do basketball and they want to do swimming and they want to do bowling. We offer 15 different sports," Mr English explains.

"Some athletes turn up to the club, they have fun – they may not participate in advancement competitions because it's leisure, but there is the opportunity for a large percentage of our registered athletes to go through various leagues, go through advancement competi-

tions and potentially represent their region or represent Special Olympics Ireland on a global stage."

And what a stage it is – the most recent games in Berlin welcomed 7,000 athletes, 190 nations, 20,000 volunteers and 300,000 spectators from all across the world. As might be expected, the games were a phenomenal success, and Ireland really put its talent on display.

Medals

"It was fantastic altogether. The 73 athletes, some of them will have competed in a number of events, like gymnastics you may compete in four to six different disciplines, so we actually had 24 gold medals, 22 silver medals and 29 bronze medals which was wonderful, but we had a lot of personal bests too," Mr English says.

Applauding those who finished with medals, Mr English says that they were equally delighted with all

of those who competed, especially those who achieved a new personal best. After all, the Special Olympics athlete oath is, "Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt".

Unfortunately, like the Church, Special Olympics Ireland continues to struggle with the aftereffects of the pandemic, with many older and longtime athletes and volunteers stepping aside following the massive disruption Covid represented.

Volunteers

"We have a challenge to recruit more volunteers – in pockets – but still it's a material number. We have a number of athletes, more likely the older ones, and people with ID would have been more profoundly impacted by the pandemic than other groups, so we certainly don't have the same volume. Whilst we're attracting new athletes and we're growing young athlete clubs, we certainly haven't got the same level of participation, which is something we're very focused on," Mr English says.

"We will have to work very hard to get back to the participation levels that we had pre-pandemic. We will get there but it will probably be a mix of recruiting new athletes, reaching out, maybe opening some new clubs or having new ways of doing things."

Legacy donations are a vital source of income for the work Special Olympics Ireland carries out, and Mr English can't emphasise enough how appreciated they are, acknowledging the personal, and often sensitive, nature of such donations.

"Fundraising and raising money, we cannot do what we do without people and without finance. The people are predominantly volunteers that make things happen, but all income, and legacies would be a really important source. They really are contributing to the future of the local community and the opportunities and joy and connection that we can bring for our athletes. Every donation, every legacy, makes a difference, and in the same way, every new person with an ID, who comes to a Special Olympics club, it's not just changing their life, but it's changing the life of their family and their community as well," Mr English says.

"I know that legacies are a very sensitive subject and that it's a very personal process for individuals. I also understand that family, and legacy to the family, has to come first, but I think it's really important for people to consider, no matter how small, whether it's a one percent of their legacy, to commit it to a worthy charity that means something to them, it does make a real difference and obviously it would make a real difference to the local community if we had more people thinking of Special Olympics when they make their legacy."



Crois Dhearg na hÉireann
Irish Red Cross

To those who are

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ALONE**

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KINDNESS
DIGNITY... and **HOPE****

With my legacy, I want you to know that you are not alone. There are people who care and who want to see you thrive.

Legacy donations provide the financial stability to expand existing programs and respond to emergencies as they arise. By leaving even 1% as a gift in your Will, you can help ensure that Irish Red Cross carries on its mission today, tomorrow, and for years to come.

Call Frank Phelan on **01 642 4645**, or email **fphelan@redcross.ie** for more information on leaving the Irish Red Cross a legacy that will truly make a difference.

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A GENEROUS GIFT FOR A BETTER WORLD

Edwin Humphreys informed us he had included Irish Red Cross in his Will. We asked him to share why he made that important choice.

“I have always been lucky. I earned enough money to live a comfortable life. I felt I deserved my good fortune.

But, as time went by, I could no longer fool myself. What I take for granted: education, work opportunities, a place to live, time for enjoyment, even the shirt on my back, are unimaginable luxuries to those for whom fate has decreed that they be born in a very different world.

It should be possible to share resources across the planet. Future generations, wiser than mine, may grasp the nettle and cut through the political barriers. Fortunately, however, some people are already tackling the problem.

The Irish Red Cross, with its associate organisations, has, for many years, been present in areas of

conflict, disease and natural catastrophe, lending comfort, medical assistance, and funds to whoever needs it most.

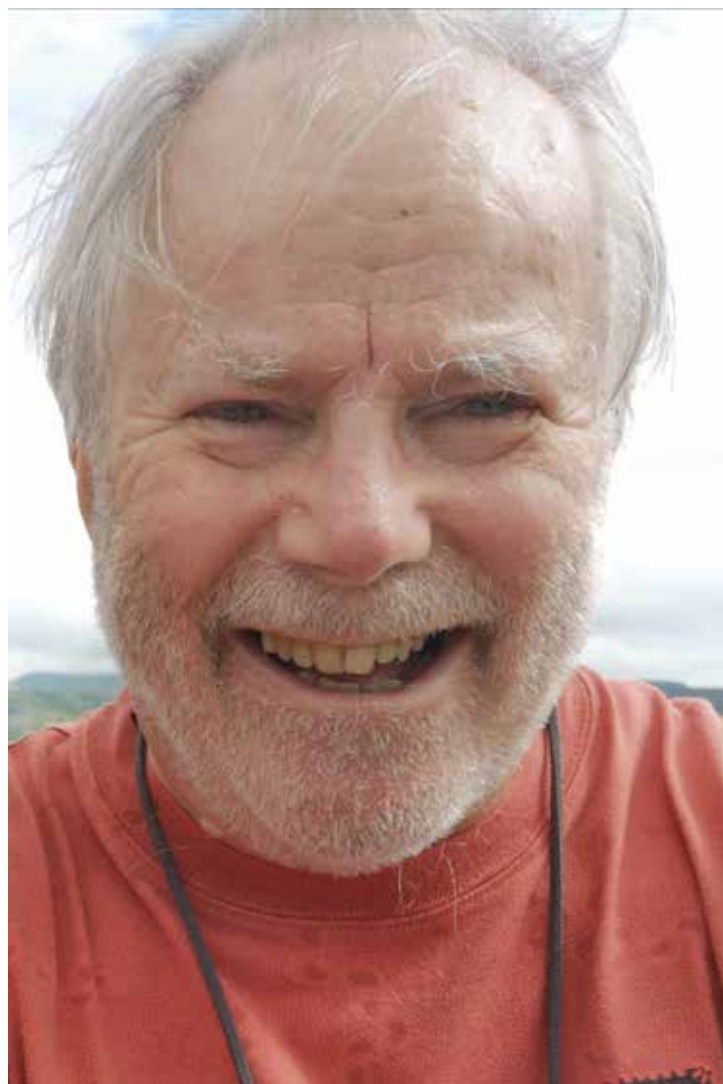
If I can help their efforts, I am proud to do so. My own contribution is probably miniscule, compared to the overall need, but I do believe that every effort should be made.

Above all, I trust the Red Cross to use my contribution effectively and efficiently.

After leaving a certain amount to family members, I have included bequests to various charities like the Irish Red Cross.

It makes sense to me that one of my final acts will be to assist with the work that, sadly, will need to continue for some time.”

If you would like to learn more about including Irish Red Cross in your Will, please contact Frank Phelan on 01 642 4645. Or email him at fphelan@redcross.ie.



Edwin Humphreys
Irish Red Cross supporter

Have you put off making your Will?

The Irish Red Cross has partnered with LawOnline so you can write your Will online for free.

A Will is essential to ensure your wishes are followed. Our service allows you to create your Will from the comfort of your own home, at a time that suits you.

Everyone should be able to create a Will regardless of their finances. That's why we're offering this service. You don't have to leave a gift to the Irish Red Cross in your Will to use it. But if you

have already decided to include us in your Will, we would like to thank you for your generosity.

To learn more, contact Frank Phelan on 01 642 4645, or email fphelan@redcross.ie. He will be happy to answer any questions you may have and guide you through the process.

A gift in your Will is a symbol of hope for the future. Your gift will ensure your legacy of caring continues. At home in Ireland and abroad, we will be there. And so will you.

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THE SYNODAL TIMES



The September issue of The Synodal Times is set to feature exclusive Synod analysis with some of the foremost names in Catholic academia, along with:

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- Chaos ensues in India as domestic Church braced for schism
- Vatican issues firm 'no' to German Synodal Path
- Irish Catholicism: A frog boiling slowly to death
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