



NEWSLETTER EXTRAORDINARY EDITION VOLUME 4

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful
committed citizens can change the world:
indeed it's the only thing that ever does.
(Margaret Mead)



PAUSE FOR THOUGHT

We know that sometimes we are alone,
and sometimes we are in community.

Sometimes we are in shadow,
and sometimes we are surrounded by shelter.

Sometimes we feel like exiles--
in our land, in our languages and in our bodies.
And sometimes we feel surrounded by welcome.

As we seek to be human together,
may we share the things that do not fade:
generosity, truth telling, silence, respect and love.

And may the power we share
be for the good of all.

We honour God, the source of this rich life.
And we honour each other, story-full and lovely.

Whether in our shadow or in our shelter,
may we live well
and fully
with each other.

Pádraig Ó Tuama



St AUGUSTINE

"Patience is the companion of wisdom."

COMMUNITY NEWS

This new edition comes with love and prayer from all the Community. We are all grateful to be well, adapting to lockdown with varying degrees of ease, and also learning to Zoom with varying degrees of ease!



S. Angela celebrated her Diamond Jubilee on Sunday May 24th in a quiet way and is looking forward to more celebrations with her family and Community once we are free to travel

Some of the Community have joined the Self-Isolation choir rehearsing the Messiah for the last two months twice a week. The concert was on Sunday 31st May.
www.theseisolationchoir.com



NEWS FROM OUR SISTERS IN AFRICA

We are all confined to our houses and the laws are very strict. It is the poorest who are really suffering..... lack of food; no medical care. Prices in the market have tripled. Children are looking under nourished and sad.



Older people here really have nothing. We have no state pensions in the DRC. Older people living with chronic diseases have no means to access health facilities since public transport has been banned, the most affected older people are those who have Diabetes and high blood pressure. They do not get any form of support from the government, which is not surprising since the government acted without considering many factors at play. There is no humanitarian assistance. It appears as though COVID-19 has made everybody desert older people. They feel they have been left on their own.

On the one hand, our economy is weak, with limited funds to support older people or sustain a robust health system. On the other, many aid agencies prioritise other groups such as women and children.

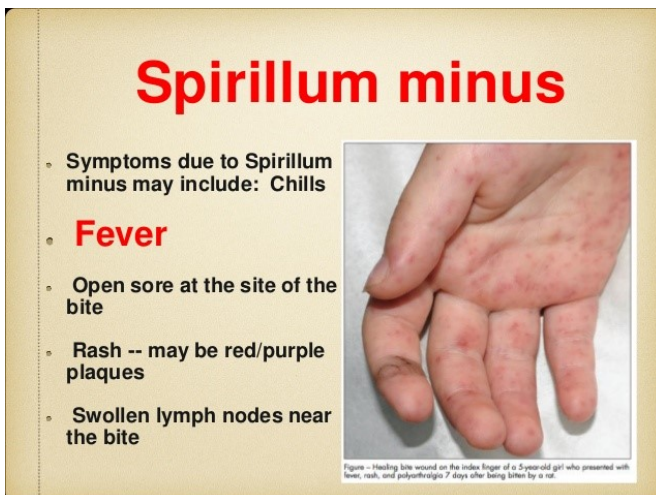
MEMORIES OF EPIDEMIC AT NEW HALL 1983

This time of pandemic has reminded people who were at New Hall in the early 1980s of an outbreak of Haverhill fever which struck the school and Community very suddenly.

What is Haverhill fever?
(sometimes called Rat-bite fever)

A medical textbook reads:

'During February, 1983, an outbreak of an unusual febrile illness occurred in over 130 children attending a boarding school in Chelmsford, Essex. The clinical features included fever, an erythematous rash that was most prominent on the hands and feet, arthralgia, and the subsequent development of a sore throat. The nature and distribution of the rash varied considerably between patients and at different stages of illness. At first a viral aetiology was regarded as most likely. When *Streptobacillus moniliformis* was later isolated from the blood of 4 of the patients with moderately severe illnesses it became apparent that an outbreak of Haverhill fever had occurred at this school. The most probable source of the outbreak was raw milk, since all 4 patients had consumed raw milk at the school shortly before the onset of symptoms and there was no evidence of person-to-person spread of infection.'



A member of the Community remembers: Haverhill Fever was a big event during this time. It was very serious and affected a significant number of the school, staff and Community. The Notifiable Diseases people came in and the 'thought to be well' school members were sent home and then, of course, several of them became ill; many children and some community were out of school recovering for weeks, if not months...

Yes there is fear.
But there does not have to be hate.
Yes there is isolation.
But there does not have to be loneliness.
Yes there is panic buying.
But there does not have to be meanness.
Yes there is sickness.
But there does not have to be disease of the soul.
Yes there is even death.
But there can always be a rebirth of love.

I think that when the dust settles, we will realize how little we need, how very much we actually have, and the true value of human connection.

REFLECTION

They say that in Wuhan after so many years of noise you can hear the birds again. They say that after just a few weeks of quiet the sky is no longer thick with fumes but blue and grey and clear.

They say that in the streets of Assisi people are singing to each other across the empty squares, keeping their windows open so that those who are alone may hear the sounds of family around them.

They say that a hotel in the West of Ireland is offering free meals and delivery to the housebound.

Today a young woman I know is busy spreading fliers with her number through the neighbourhood so that the elders may have someone to call on.

Today Churches, Synagogues, Mosques and Temples are preparing to welcome and shelter the homeless, the sick, the weary.

All over the world people are slowing down and reflecting. All over the world people are looking at their neighbours in a new way.

All over the world people are waking up to a new reality to how big we really are. To how little control we really have.

To what really matters. To Love.



**AND FINALLY
LET'S END WITH
A SMILE!**



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