

TSSF Link Tertiary Scotland and Ireland Election Address from Shelagh Norton, Ard na Cree, Church Hill, Wicklow, Co Wicklow, A67FR92, Republic of Ireland, 23.11.2015

I am a grandmother and have lived in Ireland for the last seven years, but I first came to Dublin in 1958 as a student at Trinity College, which is where I met my husband Peter. We travelled to Ireland frequently, and finally moved here. Neither of us are Irish Peter hails from Yorkshire and I'm a Londoner. After we married in 1964, we spent 14 years in Scotland where Peter lectured in zoology at Glasgow University and our three children were born. Both of us were raised as Anglicans, but joined the Church of Scotland when we lived in the village of Killearn, north of Glasgow. We moved to Durham for 2 years while Peter trained for ordination in the Church of England. He spent 24 years in parishes in Cumbria, first in Ulverston and then at or near Appleby-in-Westmorland. It was rural ministry in all its ups and downs. We lived right through the 2001 Foot and Mouth outbreak. I was professed as a Franciscan Tertiary in 1988, and at the same time Peter joined the Iona Community as an Associate. In 1998, after breast cancer, I trained as a Lay Reader, and enjoyed six years working in this ministry before we retired. We spent a year in Scotland where we have a log cabin near Hawick, and renewed our ties with both the Episcopal Church and the Kirk. A move to the village of Shipdham in Norfolk followed for Peter to put his PhD results on line. We were there for three and a half years and both ministered in the local C of E church, which included a vacancy. Finally in 2008, we emigrated and live in Wicklow town in the Irish Republic, in our 'Happy Ever After' home. Though I have not continued as a Lay Reader, we have both helped in the Church of Ireland parish, where we have had another vacancy.

My Franciscan journey which started in Ulverston, continued in the North Cumbria local group which met in Penrith, and I was Area Treasurer for some years. When we lived in the Scottish Borders, I went to the Cheviot local group of the Borders Area, though it was as near to go back to North Cumbria, which I often did. In Norfolk I belonged to the Dereham group in the East Anglia Area, and was a novice guardian till we left. Now I am Area Secretary for the Ireland Area and in the South local group - which extends from Co Cork in the south to Co Donegal on the north coast! I enjoy driving and traveling and have visited several of the Irish Tertiaries. We go to Scotland regularly and when we lived there we explored a lot of the country. I would be willing to travel there in the future. I have stayed at Alnmouth and Hilfield, and been on retreat at La Verna, and know two Tertiaries in Cornwall!

I enjoy making things, particularly patchwork, dressmaking, tapestry and knitting, and I do more of these now I am retired. I particularly liked the item on Knitting and Praying in the Little Portion of Feb 2014, and have come across this idea that rhythmic repetitive actions are conducive to relaxation and meditation from a secular source.

There's one cloud on the horizon, in that I await surgery which will mean a month or two of recovery, but I definitely hope to be back in action by mid February 2016.

I'm attracted to the role of Link Tertiary because I enjoy travelling and meeting people, and I know Tertiaries in many parts of the British Isles. It would be good to see more of the Scottish and Irish Tertiaries and share their Franciscan journey.