



St. Patrick's Missionary Society Ireland

Annual Report 2019



Mission Statement

We are a small Society but we have a big dream: we are committed to making a difference in the world through the power of Jesus' counter-cultural vision of life: of love and truth, of freedom and hope. It therefore means working for unity and reconciliation in such a way that ethnic, religious, national, cultural and historical differences are overcome. It means crossing boundaries created by culture, language, and world view. It compels us to seek out the least, the last and the lost, to accept the uniqueness of peoples and recognise the special gifts bestowed on them by God's Spirit. We strive for a more just, inclusive and compassionate world. In the words of Pope Francis, "we have to state, without mincing words, that there is an inseparable bond between our faith and the poor".

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Message from the Society Leader

St Patrick's Missionary Society has been proclaiming the Gospel message for the past eighty-seven years to different peoples around the world, offering education and development in a variety of situations, and nurturing Church communities to maturity. Founded in Ireland and beginning our missionary work in South Eastern Nigeria, our presence has spread across Africa and beyond to places like Brazil and Grenada, expanding boldly over the decades.



Our work on mission, through the generous support of our many benefactors, enables us to share the Good News of Jesus and serve Him as living examples of His compassion. Our missionary service spreads the Gospel and builds up Church communities but also includes relieving the burden of poverty on many peoples in countries in Africa, and in Brazil and Grenada, and in advancing their education and development.

In recent times, our Society decided to invite young men from Africa and Brazil to join us, and now we are actively promoting vocations to the missionary life in many countries. We have invested heavily in structures and personnel to facilitate the training and formation of the men who respond to the call to missionary priesthood. Currently we are educating over ninety seminarians in Africa and we have witnessed a new surge of life and energy in the Society through the priestly ordination of thirty-seven African members over the last twelve years.

This past year, as well as doing our normal missionary work, we have focused on making the principles of Pope Francis, expressed in *Laudato Si* on Care for the Earth, a reality in our communities. In many places around the world, Society members are engaged in a variety of 'Green Projects,' examples of which are re-forestation programmes and renewable energy projects. In particular, we have made it our aim to provide all the heating and electric power necessary for our large administrative and accommodation facilities in our compound in Kiltegan solely from renewable resources and to have a fossil fuel free compound. To facilitate this, 34 acres of willow trees have been planted and a new bio-mass furnace has been installed. With the harvesting of the willow on a rotational basis and its transformation into wood chip for the furnace, we have enough non-fossil fuel to provide the heating in all our buildings. In regard to electricity, we are harnessing wind power and utilising solar panels to satisfy our electric power. We are not fully free from the use of fossil fuel energy yet, but we hope that we will soon reach our target as we are planning to install more solar panels in the coming year. Finally, we, as a missionary Society, along with forty-eight other Catholic institutions and in response to the Global Catholic Climate Movement, have pledged a full divestment of investments in fossil fuel companies. Our process of divesting from all fossil fuel extraction companies and reinvesting where possible in renewable energy companies is now almost complete.

We have also made changes in the past year to our legal structure in Ireland. We have adopted a new constitution in line with the Charities Regulatory Authority guidelines and our charity will now be known as "St. Patrick's Missionary Society Ireland". The new constitution and updated legal structure enables us to comply with best practice in good governance.

With the continued help and prayers of our benefactors and supporters, the priests and members of St Patrick's Missionary Society remain committed to helping all people in our world in the name of Christ and to making the conditions of living better for many peoples in our world.

With much gratitude,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads 'Victor Dunne'.

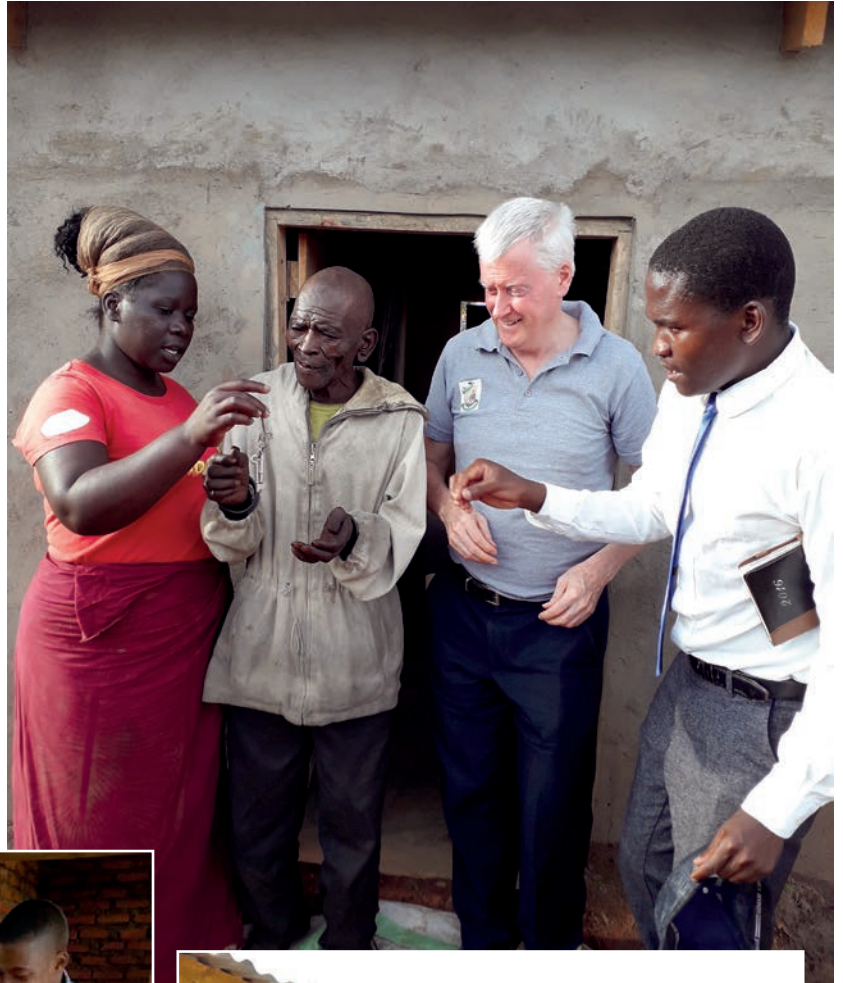
Rev Victor Dunne,
Society Leader

Caring for the Elderly Poor in Malawi

...love and sharing in action

In Fr Martin Reilly's parish in Malawi the Young Christian Students (YCS) discovered an old man called Kaunda living in a broken down shack with no furniture. The students decided to build a house for Mr. Kaunda. Fr. Martin provided some resources and the YCS did the work during their school holidays.

On the day of the handing over of the keys Chizaso Kaunda did not turn up – he had no good clothes to wear for the occasion, he said. That was soon solved and he was overcome with joy as he thanked everyone over and over again. "Housing one old man is a small gesture," says Fr. Martin, "but the YCS got a lesson for life and all the neighbours and parishioners saw love and sharing in action."



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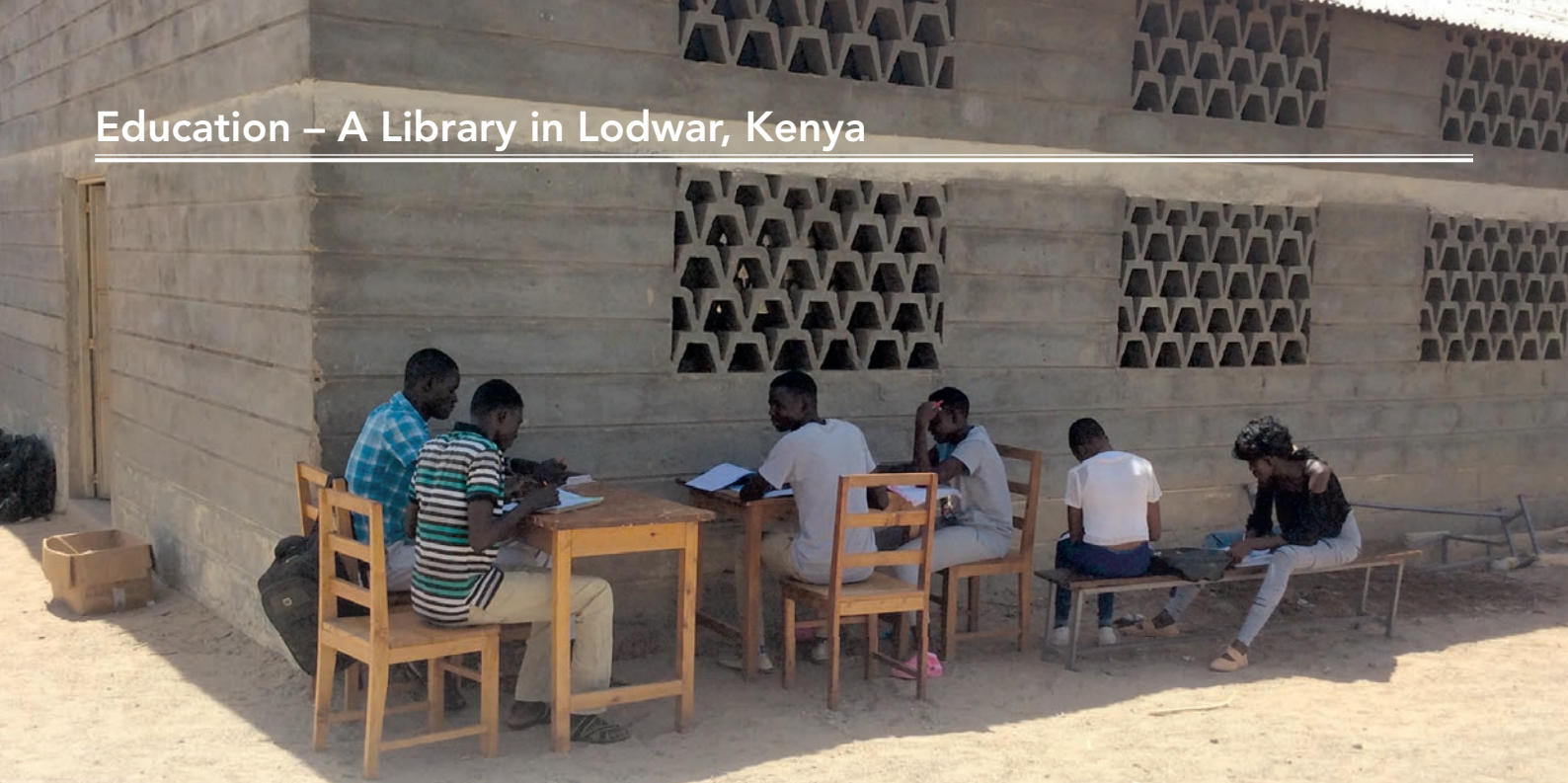
Environmental Activism in Nigeria

Mr. Kevin O'Hara is well known in Nigeria for his human rights and environmental ministry. He campaigns with local groups for non-violent lobbying and direct strategic engagement with irresponsible oil companies and local communities. "I was greatly encouraged when Pope Francis wrote his encyclical letter *Laudato Si'*. He emphasised the importance of our care for the earth and warned that if the earth's inhabitants don't change their destructive habits our future is in peril."

“For years I worked with environmental activists who exposed the oil companies for their exploitative mentality and lack of concern for the communities and the environment. I was greatly encouraged when Pope Francis wrote his encyclical letter ‘Laudato Si’ recently.”



Education – A Library in Lodwar, Kenya



“Previously the challenge was to convince parents to embrace education for their children. Now, it is how to see the children through school.”

Lodwar town in northern Kenya has 35 schools but no library. The local parish recognised this need and converted their multipurpose hall to a library for school students. The textbooks which are scarce in the schools and often missing completely are supplied in the library. For many students this is their only opportunity to read the textbooks.

The parish priest, Fr. Livinus Onogwu says, “Previously the challenge was to convince parents to embrace education for their children. Now, it is how to see the children through school. It means paying school fees, providing food and text books – the basic essentials.”



The Legacy of Apartheid in South Africa



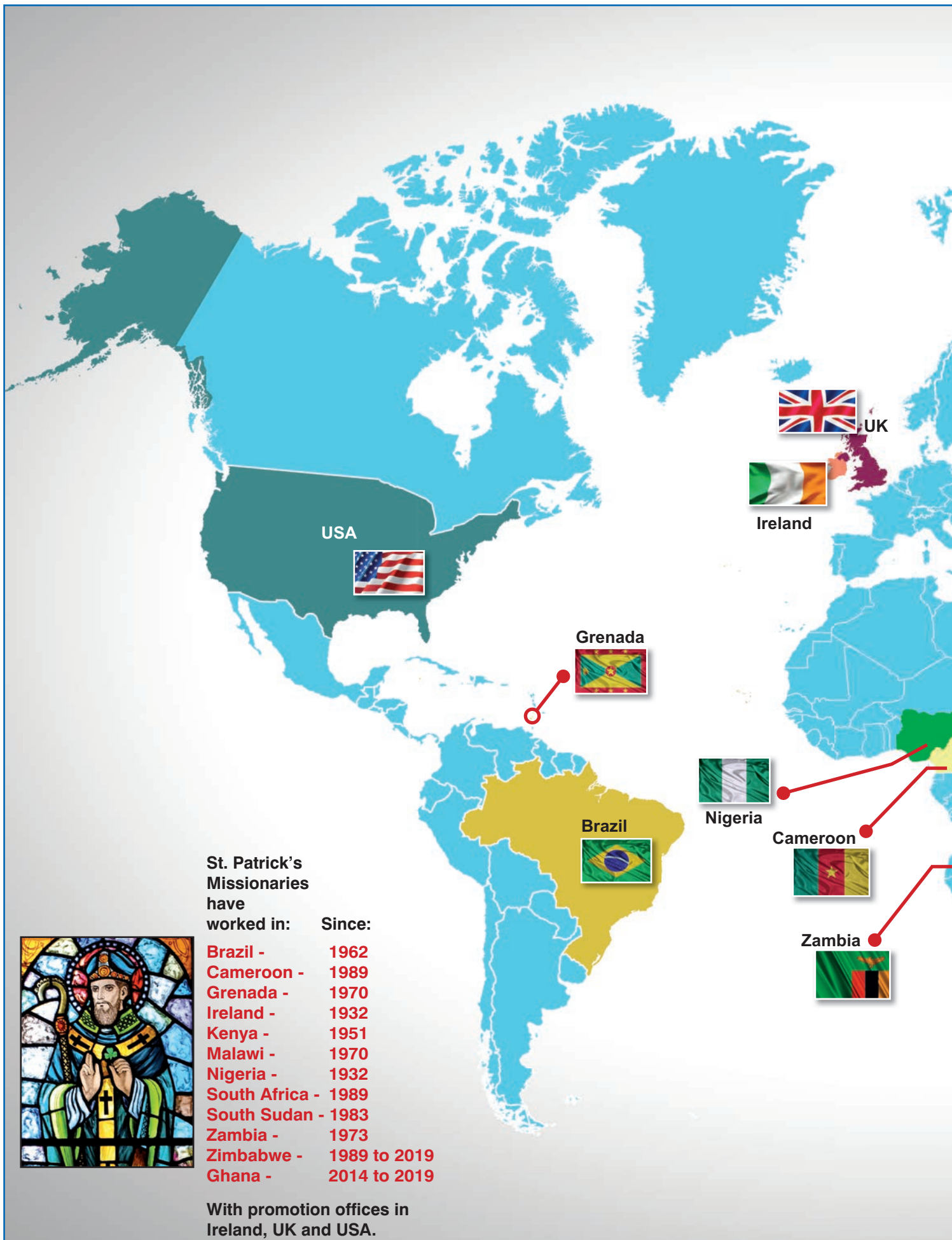
Apartheid is the Afrikaans (South African language) name for the policy of white rule in South Africa which began in 1948. It came to an end with the first democratic elections in 1994. “Dealing with the legacy of apartheid,” says Fr. Michael Bennett, “continues to be a fundamental challenge in this country. Racism has created mistrust and fostered a desire for self-preservation at almost any cost.”



Fr. Michael works in Johannesburg and has a special ministry to the youth growing up in a multicultural South Africa. The Catholic Bishops Conference has advised, “The task of reconciliation requires watchfulness. We ask all parish priests and parishioners to commit their parishes to a campaign to overcome racism. We ask each parish to organise themselves to do this.”

“Dealing with the legacy of apartheid continues to be a fundamental challenge in this country....We ask all parish priests and parishioners to commit their parishes to a campaign to overcome racism.”

Mission Map - Where we work





THE MOVE FROM FOSSIL FUELS...

to become energy efficient

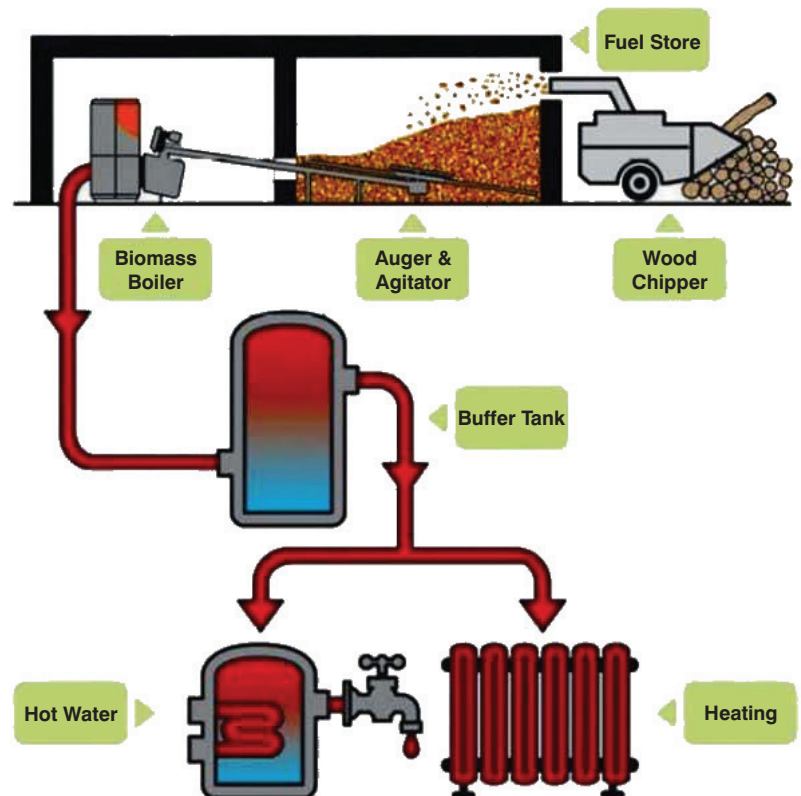
In 2017 SPMS Ireland began to implement a project to replace the oil heating system in Kiltegan with a Biomass burner. One central boiler has replaced the oil burners in the four main buildings. Our own mature commercial forest and thirty-four acres of short coppice willow crop is providing the biomass fuel. All our central heating and domestic hot water is now produced from home grown wood chip.

“One hectare of willow produces the equivalent energy of 4,000 litres of heating oil. Burning this amount of oil releases 9 tonnes of CO₂. Willow biomass fuel is carbon neutral – this means that it absorbs the same amount of carbon during growth as it releases during combustion in the boiler.”

1 unit of heat from electricity = €0.16

1 unit of heat from oil = €0.07

1 unit of heat from wood biomass = €0.016



A typical biomass heating system.

“90% reduction in emissions from woodchip compared to oil.”

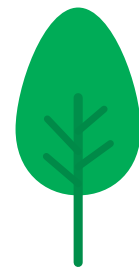
TEAGASC (Agriculture and Food Development Authority)



Filling the boiler store with wood chip. This labour saving operation is required once a week at full production.



One 600kW biomass boiler supplies all the heating required for the domestic hot water and central heating of all four buildings on the Kiltegan compound. It replaces 35,000 litres of oil per annum.

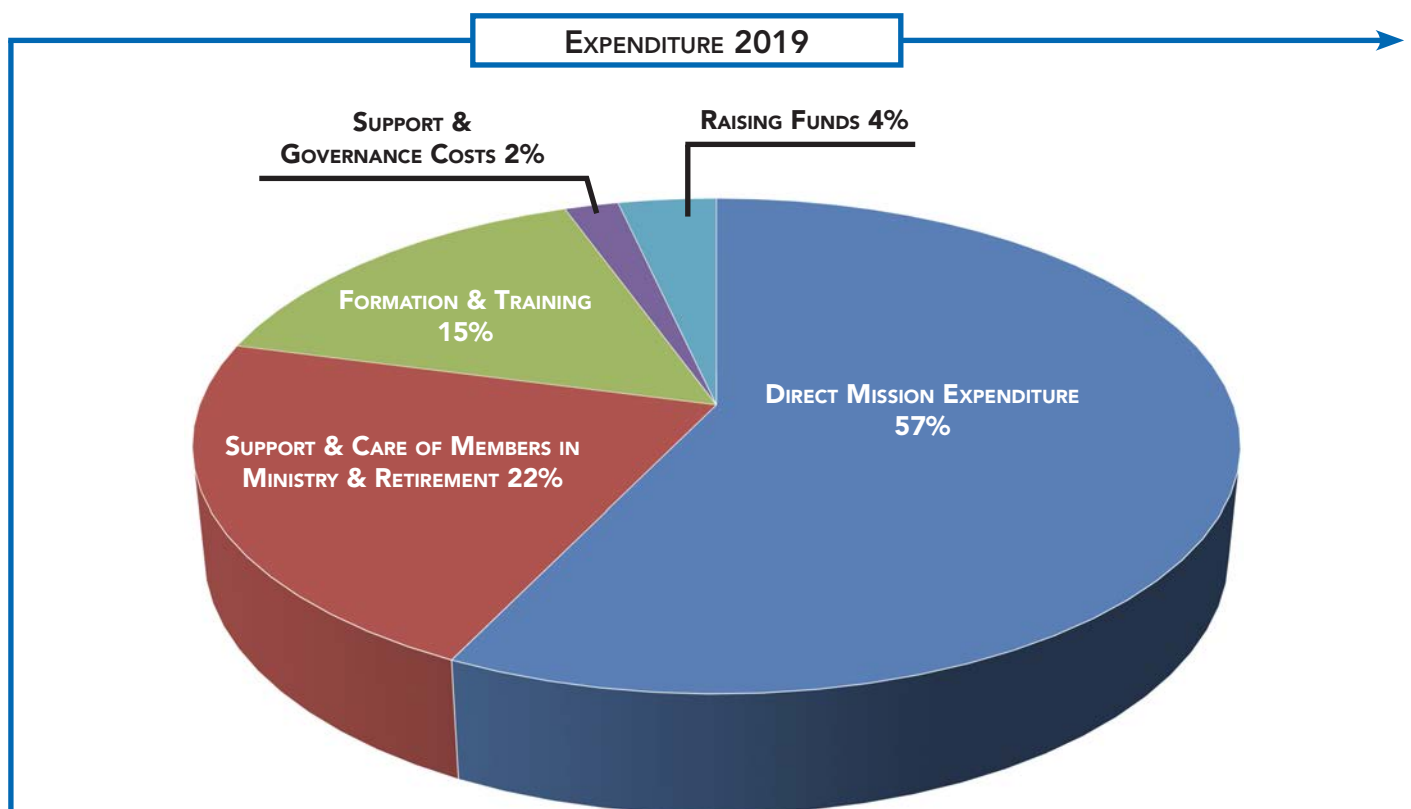
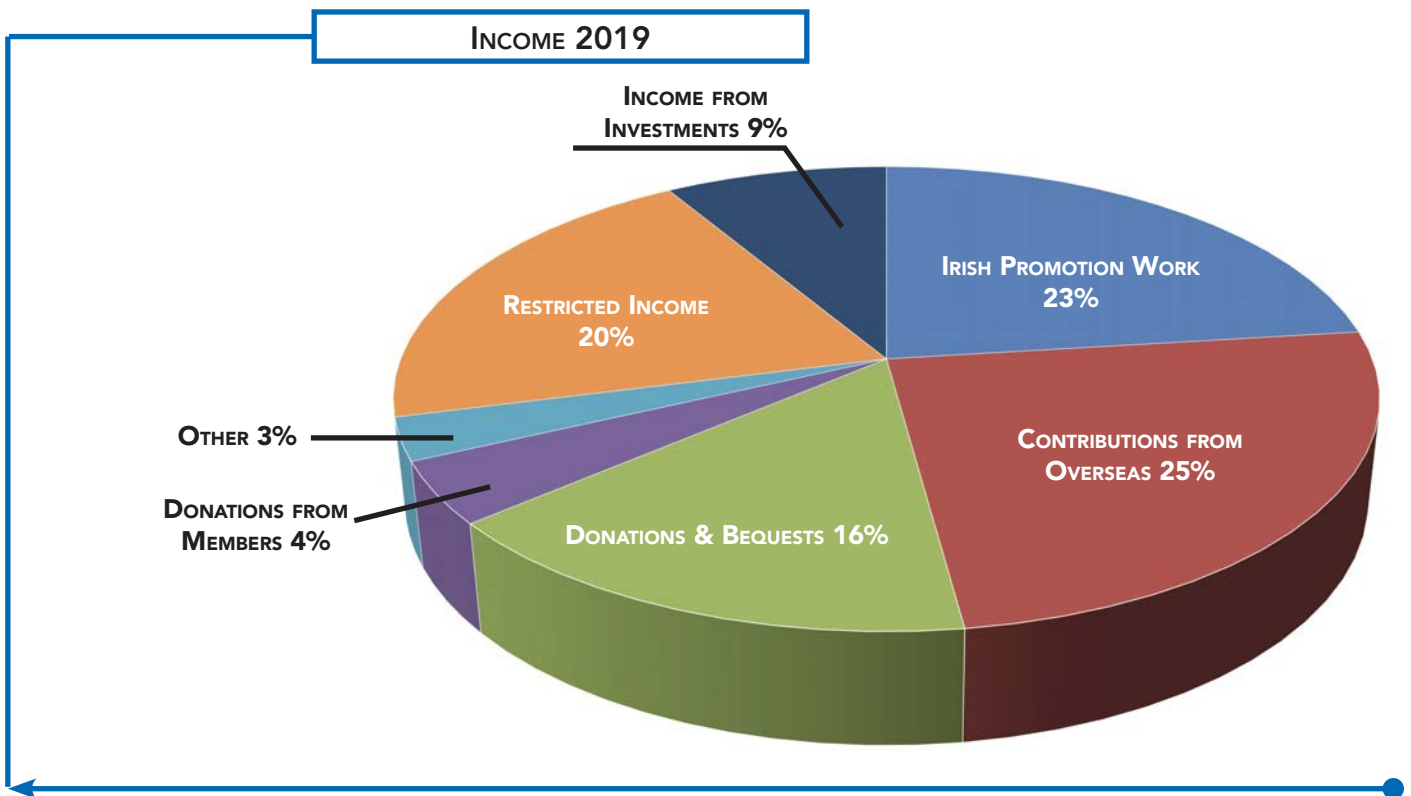


After three years of extraordinary growth the willow is ready for harvest. It will produce approximately 60 tonnes of biomass per hectare. It will lose 30% of its mass in the drying process before it can be used for fuel.

Financial Data

OUR FINANCES

Our benefactors continue to be generous and faithful to us. Their support enables us to continue all our mission commitments. Our 2019 audited financial statements show an income of **€9.7 million** (2018 – €10.6 million). They can be summarised as follows:



Our financial statements are available on request from our office. If you look closely at our financial statements, a number of key observations can be noted:

- Income decreased from 2018 to 2019 by 8%. There has been a 27% decrease in the number of donors in the last 6 years.
- Due to the upturn in the stock market and movement in exchange rates, our investments' value and therefore our reserves have increased from 2018 to 2019 by 16%.
- It is the Society's policy to retain sufficient reserves to safeguard the continuity of its commitment to long term mission projects together with caring for the retired members of the community and at the same time committing the maximum possible resources to current programmes.
- As our members' age and return home from the missions, (see chart below), this financial burden will increase and we are preparing for this increase in costs by judiciously maintaining our reserves.
- At the end of 2019 reserve funds had been designated for specific purposes as follows:
 - Commitments to Ongoing Projects € 3m
 - Property Fund €8.9m
 - Overseas Support of Members €10m
 - Formation and Training €4.5m
 - Mission Development Office €10m

Promotion and Mission Awareness

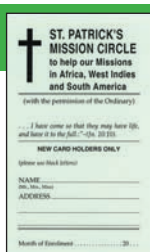
The promotion of mission awareness is coordinated from our head office in Kiltegan, Co. Wicklow which has a staff of nineteen. Our Society is allocated two dioceses in Ireland every year where our priests visit every parish to speak on our mission and to appeal for financial help. (There were approximately 76 parish visits in 2019.) We depend on such voluntary donations from Ireland, UK and USA for our income. For over 80 years our generous and faithful benefactors have provided us with adequate resources to carry out our mission work and to provide support for the poor and underprivileged.



We promote mission awareness by publishing nine issues per year of our *Africa* magazine. It has a circulation of 31,000 copies (per issue) and is distributed in Ireland, UK and USA.

MISSION CIRCLE

St. Patrick's Mission Circle began in the 1950s. As a member of our Mission Circle family, all family and friends, living and deceased, named on a Mission Circle card, are remembered in three daily Masses, monthly novenas and our daily prayers. Deceased members are especially remembered in November. Members make a voluntary annual contribution. Some of our supporters have been Mission Circle members for over 60 years.



WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

www.spms.org



Our website www.spms.org and Facebook pages cover all areas of promotion: Mission Circle, Occasion Cards, Christmas cards, Mission Appeals, Prayer leaflets and *Africa* magazine. We have built up an online following of support for the Society, both spiritually and financially.

OCCASION CARDS

Another method of fundraising is through the use of our **Occasion Cards** (available in Ireland, England, Scotland and USA). These are a prayerful way of including family and friends in our daily Masses and prayers. We have specially designed cards to cover all occasions. The names enrolled are remembered in the daily Masses and prayers of the Society for one year. Supporters give a donation towards the Society.

Our Society at a glance:

247 Society Members

€1.9m Restricted income 2019



€2.2m Total Irish Promotion Income 2019

210 From Europe and America

37 From Africa



89 St. Patrick's students currently studying for the priesthood

134 Society Members working in overseas missions



St Patrick's Occasion Cards used per year
250,000



38 Priests ordained for the Society since 2007



Mission Circle Members
50,000

15 Expenditure spread across countries worldwide



31,000 Subscribers

Leadership



St Patrick's Missionary Society Ireland is registered with the Charities Regulator in Ireland. Charity Number: 20004231.

It has been granted tax exemption by the Revenue Commissioners in Ireland and has a charitable tax exemption number: CHY 3397.

Registered Address: St. Patrick's, Kiltegan, Co Wicklow, Ireland.

Trustees

Rev. Victor Dunne, Rev. John Marren, Rev. Seamus O'Neill (Secretary), Rev. Denis O'Rourke, Rev. David Walsh



Victor Dunne (Irish) is a member of SPMS since 1979. He worked in education, formation and pastoral ministry. He was elected Society Leader and appointed Chairman of the Trustees in 2014.



John Marren (Irish) is a member of SPMS since 1978. He worked in administration, leadership and pastoral ministry. He was elected Assistant Society Leader and appointed a Trustee in 2014.



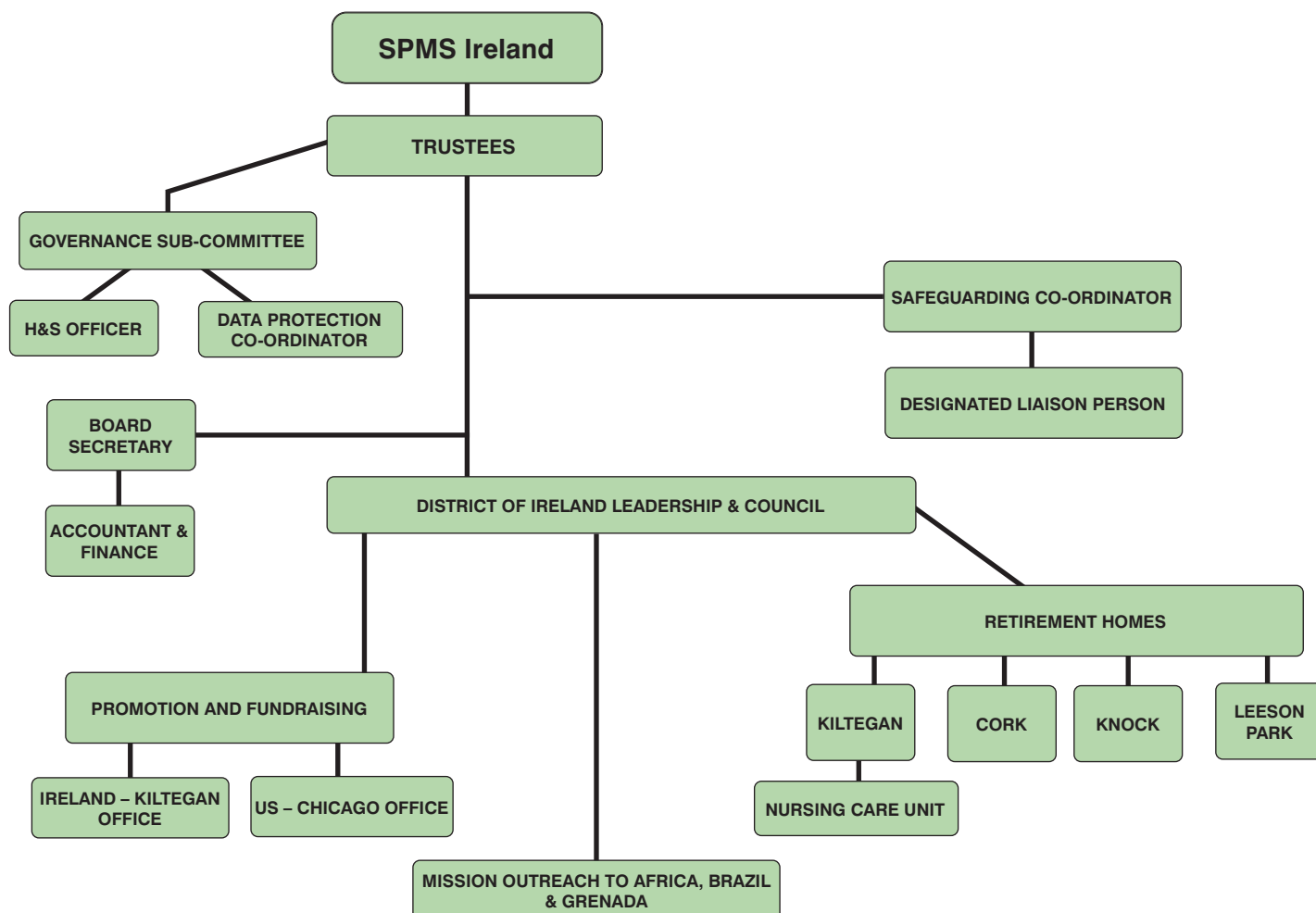
Seamus O'Neill (Irish) is a member of SPMS since 1973. He worked in education, leadership and pastoral ministry. He was appointed as a Trustee and Secretary of the company in 2015.



Denis O'Rourke (Irish) is a member of SPMS since 1966. He worked in education, finance and pastoral ministry. He served as Secretary of the company from 2003 to 2014. In 2015 he was re-appointed as a Trustee.



David Walsh (Irish) is a member of SPMS since 1973. He worked in pastoral ministry, promotion, leadership and administration. He was appointed as a Trustee in 2018.



Code of Good Governance



St Patrick's Missionary Society Ireland is a registered charity (Charity No. 20004231). We report to the Charities Regulatory Authority (CRA) and we submit our Annual Report and full audited Financial Statements and Directors' Report to the CRA annually.



We are compliant with the Charities Governance Code and have completed the Compliance Form for 2020. We have committed our organisation to observing the six principles of the Code with all their practical, legal and regulatory implications.

The Charities Governance Code is assisting us to become more transparent and accountable to our stakeholders, donors, staff and the general public. In this way we hope to build trust, to become a more efficient and effective organisation and thus achieve our stated purpose, mission and objectives with integrity.



CRA require us to file our completed Compliance Form in 2021 and we are ready for this additional level of accountability. Our Trustees welcome and are fully committed to this transition.



GUIDELINES FOR CHARITIES FUNDRAISING FROM THE PUBLIC

In order that our supporters and benefactors will continue to have trust and confidence in us and in how we govern our charity, we have adopted the good practice set out in the Guidelines issued by the CRA. This involves following the law and the recognised standards, protecting ourselves from undue risk and showing respect for our beneficiaries, donors and the public. For more details see our **Donor Charter** at www.spms.org

DATA PROTECTION

We have a comprehensive Data Protection Policy. The aim of the policy is to ensure that all personal data is collected in a fair and lawful manner, that it is handled and stored securely and that we comply fully with all the legal requirements of the Data Protection Acts. We have trained and appointed a Data Protection Coordinator (email: dataprotection@spms.ie). Our **Privacy Policy** is available at www.spms.org





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