



St. Patrick's Missionary Society Ireland

Annual Report 2020



Supporting education and clean water in South Sudan (see page 4.)

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 divisions 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 people's uniquenesses 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".

Contents

1	Mission Statement
2	Message from Society Leader
3	Missionaries Honoured
4	Supporting Education and Clean Water
4	Harvesting Rain in the Desert
5	New Parish Complex, Brazil
6	Pilgrimage in Cameroon
7	Mission Map – Where we work
9	Covid-19, Global Pandemic
11	Financial Data
12	Promotion & Mission Awareness
13	Leadership
14	Governance

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.

Over twenty years ago, 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 eighty seminarians in Africa and we have witnessed a new surge of life and energy in the Society through the priestly ordination of forty three African members over the last fourteen years.

This past year, as well as doing our normal missionary work, we have continued our focus on implementing the principles of Pope Francis, outlined in *Laudato Si'* on Care for the Earth. In our mission areas around the world, Society members are engaged in a variety of 'Green Projects,' examples of which are re-afforestation programmes, the harvesting of water, and renewable energy projects, with a special focus on the installation of solar panels.

In our world today the Covid-19 pandemic has caused and is causing great trauma and suffering for many millions of people. To assist in alleviating the hardship that people are enduring, we created a Covid-19 Emergency Fund in April 2020. Through this fund, we have reached out to help thousands of forgotten people living in the remote areas in which we work.



We remain very grateful to our benefactors and supporters, who in the Covid-19 crisis even increased their donations towards our missionary and developmental efforts. With their continued help and prayers, 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,

Victor Dunne
Rev Victor Dunne,
Society Leader

Missionaries honoured...

In November 2020, St Patrick's Fr Kevin O'Hara was announced as a recipient of the Presidential Distinguished Service Award for the Irish Abroad for 2020. It was for his contribution to Peace, Reconciliation and Development in Nigeria. Fr Kevin is from Stranorlar, Co Donegal. He was ordained in 1980 and has spent most of the intervening years in Nigeria. He has a special interest in the Niger Delta area of Nigeria. The pollution caused by oil spills has wreaked havoc on thousands of hectares of land in that oil rich area leaving many local farmers impoverished and without a livelihood. Kevin has collaborated with the local people to hold the big oil companies accountable for their actions and through his advocacy work has ensured that they take responsibility for the spillages and repair some of the damage caused to the environment.



In October 2020, St Patrick's Fr Seán Doggett, who works in Grenada, was awarded an OBE by Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom for religious and community service in Grenada. Fr Seán who is from Dublin, was ordained in 1966 and has worked in three different countries during his almost fifty-five years as a missionary priest.



In 2020, St Patrick's celebrated 50 years in Grenada. In 1970, on 20th October, three Kiltegan priests arrived – Fathers Paddy Hannelly, Joe Dollard and Pádraig MacCormac. John F Sheehan arrived two weeks and a little later Joe Gilmartin and Pat Walsh joined them. Others came over the following years. The work continues. The work being done by Fr Seán Doggett in communications and in the Jubilee movement is of great importance. We must also look to our youth. Our seminarian from Kenya, Humphrey Wesonga, provides a bright sign of hope for the future. Most of all for the first time, Grenada has three of its own priests – young, bright and highly committed pastors. There is certainly hope for the future.



Supporting Education and Clean Water

South Sudan is the youngest country in the world. Just 10 years old, it is still recovering from years of war. Vital services like health care and education are scarce and basic resources are in short supply. United Nations statistics claim that 80% of the population have to survive on less than one dollar a day.

St Patrick's Boys Secondary School in Narus, South Sudan, is a unique success. Established three years ago by Fr. Emmanuel Obi it is now a thriving centre of learning and a bright hope for the future. Bright students from distant villages come to Narus because St Patrick's is the only secondary school in that part of the country.

Under the direction of Fr Peter Mwale and the assistance of SPMS Ireland a new bore hole was drilled and a hand pump installed to provide fresh clean water for the school. The supply of water is so good that it provides irrigation for the students' vegetable garden. While they provide fresh vegetables for their kitchen they are also learning farming skills that will benefit them in later life.



Harvesting Rain in the Desert

Lokichoggio is a remote outpost in the nomadic area of Turkana in northern Kenya. Average annual rainfall is between 14 to 18 inches. Water is precious and difficult to find. Households walk for miles each day to draw water from unsafe waterholes shared by domestic and wild animals.

Fr Stanley Duru says he was inspired by Pope Francis's exhortation in "Laudato Si" to care for the earth and care for the poor. He decided with the help of SPMS Ireland to provide storage tanks to enable them to harvest rain water. When the scarce rain falls in Turkana it simply soaks away into the sandy soil. Large storage tanks enable families to harvest the precious rain and keep it stored for the dry season. It results in better hygiene, improved health and safe preparation of food.



New Parish Complex in Mato Grosso, Brazil



Bishop Derek Byrne and Fr Vitalis Inyang work in Primavera do Leste in the state of Mato Grosso in the Amazon basin of Brazil. What was once a small outpost in the Amazon interior is now a fast expanding and developing city. The parish has had to expand and develop quickly also to meet the requirements of the booming population. New parish buildings had to be constructed while resources were scarce. SPMS Ireland contributed towards a social complex, a new church and solar lighting.

Fr Vitalis is one of our new generation of missionaries. Growing up in Nigeria, educated in South Africa and Kenya, he now works on mission in Brazil. He is truly an international missionary, a product of many traditions and cultures, reaching beyond borders to welcome the stranger and to be made welcome among strangers.



Pilgrimage in Cameroon

St Patrick's student Stanley Wehere completed his First Missionary Assignment in Cameroon. Here is a short account of his experience.

“Aweh Hill is a pilgrimage site located in the parish of St Charles Borromeo in the Northwest Region of Cameroon where I did my first missionary assignment (FMA). It was built by Kiltegan priest Fr Rory O’Brien during his time there. Stations of the Cross were erected and dedicated in 2009 in loving memory of Fr Valentine Ngoran, a priest of the Archdiocese of Bamenda.



I came at a period when the country was experiencing war and my area of mission was affected. It began a few years ago but in 2018, it escalated. What stood out for me in this experience was the fact that the parishioners were all aware of the ongoing crisis but still they took the risk of coming on the pilgrimage. Some even had to leave their homes very early in the morning which was dangerous. The war was on our doorstep. Gunshots became as familiar as music to us. Properties were destroyed and people lost their lives in and around where I was.



This annual pilgrimage to Aweh Hill means a lot to the Christian communities and they would put their lives at risk rather than wait for a safer day. This is how we shared in the suffering of Christ during the Lenten season. We did not let the threat of danger be a hindrance. Let us pray for peace and unity in Cameroon.”

Mission Map - Where we work



Covid-19, Global Pandemic

Kiltegan, Ireland: A rare sight in St Patrick's, Kiltegan...Lockdown was the order of the day in late March 2020. In keeping with governmental Covid 19 restrictions, we closed the grounds in Kiltegan with access permitted to essential staff only. Our elderly members were "cocooned" in the Care Unit and every precaution was taken to keep the virus at bay. Not being allowed to celebrate Mass together as a community was a great poverty. However in private Masses members prayed for our friends, supporters and benefactors and for the many people who asked us to pray for special intentions. Our annual Family Day was cancelled for the first time since it began back in the 1990s. We are all looking forward to brighter days ahead.



As the year went on and the Covid pandemic spread across the world, life changed for our missionaries and students overseas also...

Theology Students, Nairobi, Kenya.

Student Denis Agi reports: "For us, in St Patrick's Theology House Nairobi, the Covid-19 pandemic altered our programme in significant ways. The college where we study suspended classes in line with Government regulations. We all had to adjust to online lessons and hoped it would be over in a short while. However, the weeks became months and nothing changed. Soon, we had exhausted our semester planner, the only remaining item was holidays. But with international borders closed that was not feasible. We suggested enrolment for short practical courses and it was approved. Between us we studied motor vehicle mechanics, electronics and welding. We also had an advantage during this time of the pandemic at the workshop as we were the only students and had the full attention of the teacher and the other mechanics. There is no doubt that the pandemic has brought devastating effects on the world. In our own lives too it denied us our home leave when we were hoping to see family after two years. But in the midst of all this, it has also given us an opportunity to acquire some vital skills which will benefit us later in life."



Zambia: Father PJ Breen, parish priest of St Faustina's Parish, Lusaka, responded to the cry of the poor by offering 10kg bags of maize flour to those suffering from HIV/AIDS and whose lives have been adversely affected by the Covid-19 crisis. Helping Fr PJ is Paul Sakala from the parish. "Body and spiritual hunger are knocking all the more when the church doors are closed."



Brazil: Due to the tremendous generosity of our supporters, St Patrick's Missionaries were able to provide emergency aid to several areas in the world worst hit by the Coronavirus. Pictured are Sr Renata and Fr Mellon (straw hat) delivering food parcels in the area of Alvarães on the Amazon river in Brazil. The boat, 'Papa Francisco' is the principal means of transport for the parish.



Fr Vitalis Inyang (left) from Nigeria works in the parish of Santa Anna, Chapada dos Guimarães, Brazil, a town regarded as the midpoint of South America. During 2020 Mass and confessions were celebrated outdoors.

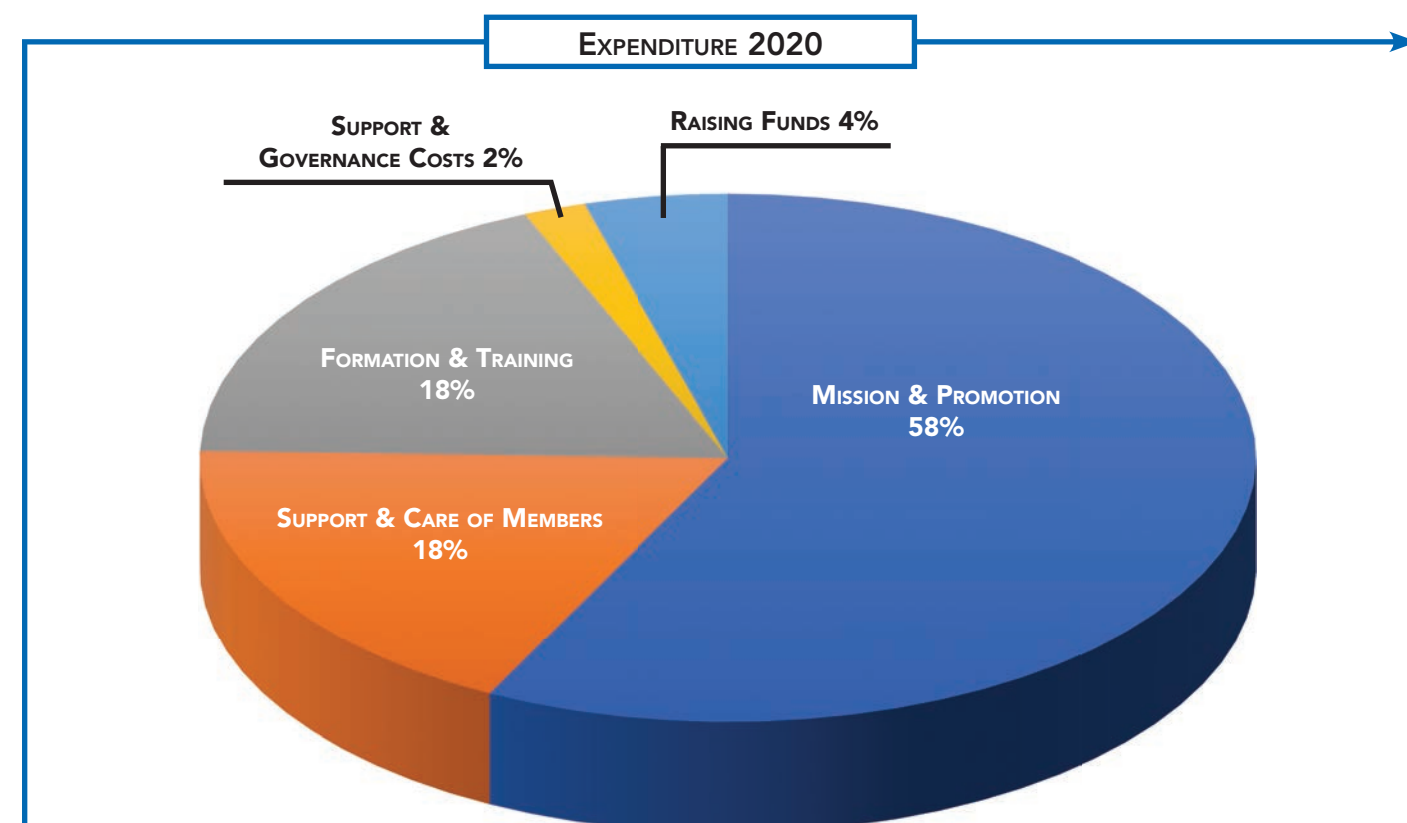
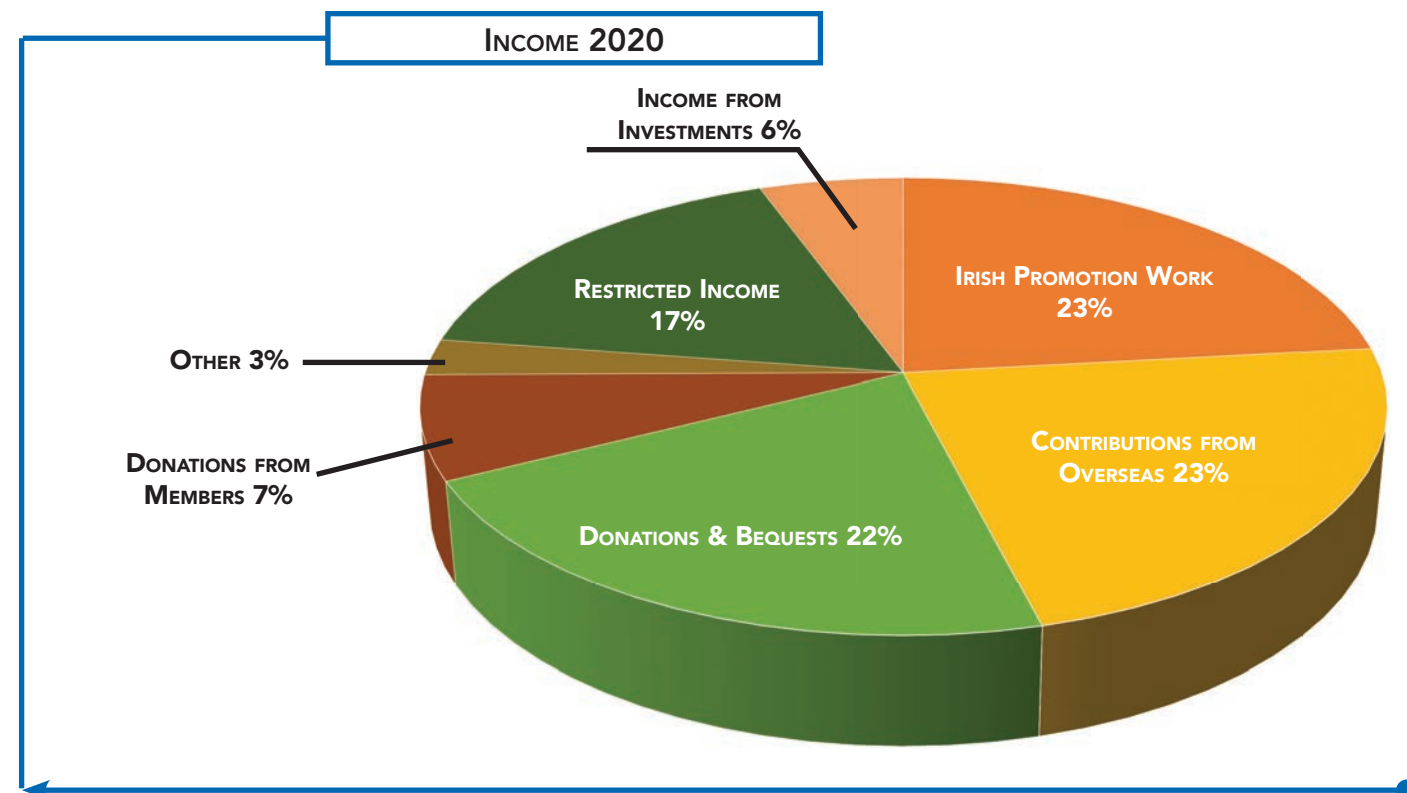


South Africa: Fr Godfrey Kisabuli (right) reports: "In December 2020, after months of restrictions, priests were granted temporary faculties to celebrate the sacrament of confirmation. Myself and Fr Michael Bennett work in the township parish of St Paul's, Tsakane in Johannesburg. We are neighbours of Frs Kieran Birmingham and Tom Devoy who work in Brakpan."

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 2020 audited financial statements show an income of **€10.2 million** (2019 – €9.7 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 increased from 2019 to 2020 by 4.5%. There has been a 25% 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 2019 to 2020 by 10%.
- 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 2020 reserve funds had been designated for specific purposes as follows:
 - Commitments to Ongoing Projects € 3m
 - Property Fund €8.7m
 - 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. Due to Covid-19 restrictions there were no parish visits in 2020. We depend on such voluntary donations from Ireland, UK and USA for our income. For over 85 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 25,000 copies (per issue) and is distributed in Ireland, UK and USA.

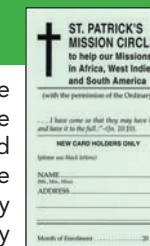
WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA
www.spms.org



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.

MISSION CIRCLE

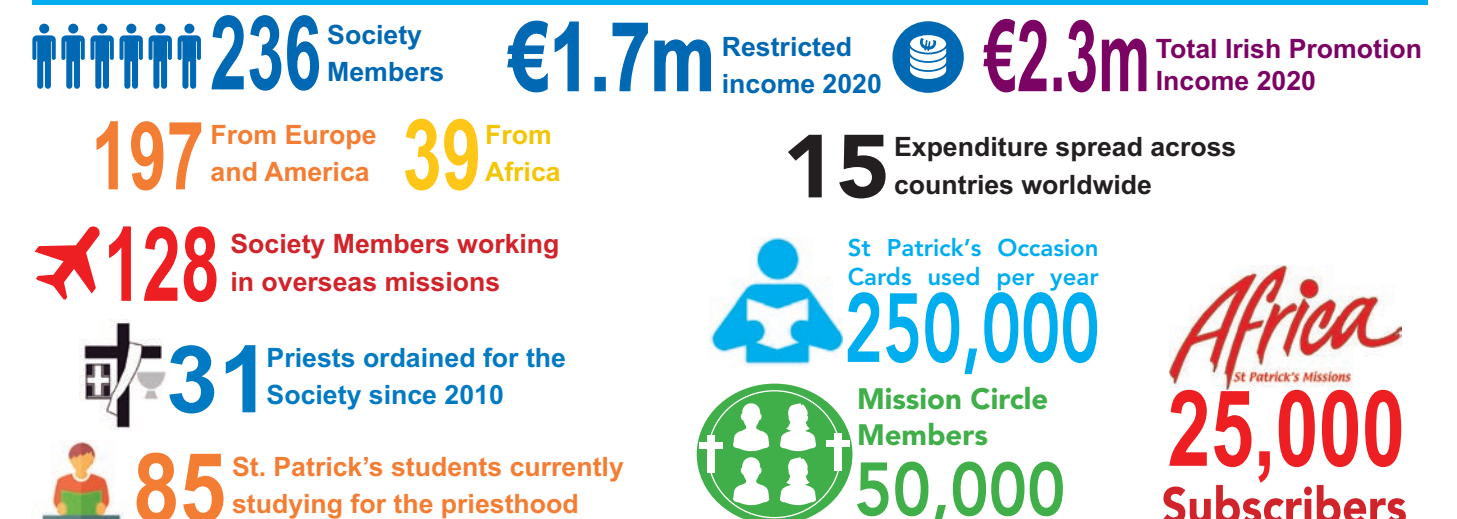
St. Patrick's Mission Circle began in the 1950s. As a member of our Mission Circle family, all family and friends, living and deceased, named on a Mission Circle card, are remembered in three daily Masses, monthly novenas and our daily prayers. Deceased members are especially remembered in November.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



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:



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), Kevin Carroll, 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.



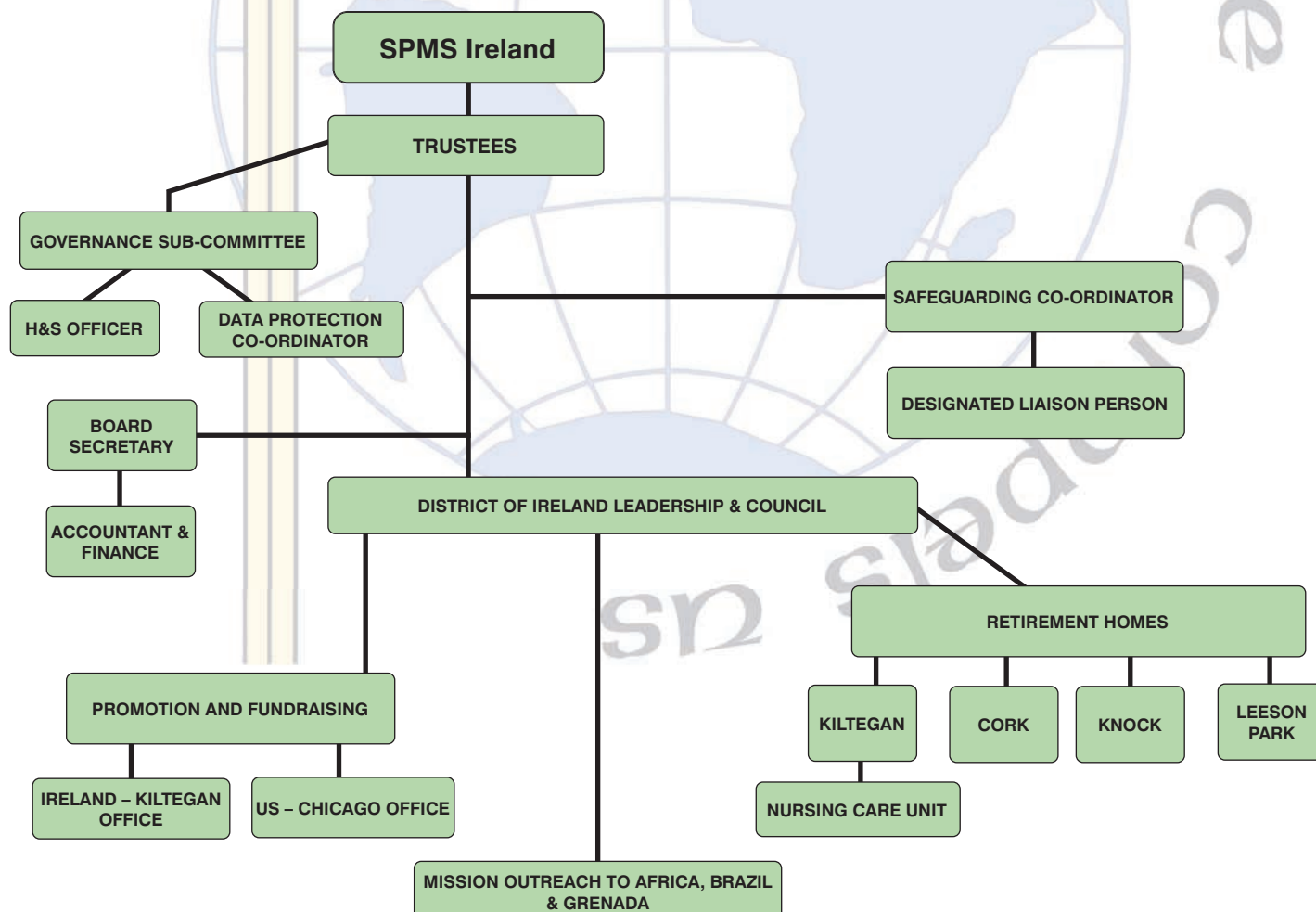
Seamus O'Neill (Irish) is a member of SPMS since 1973. He worked in education, leadership and pastoral ministry. He was appointed as a Trustee and Secretary of the company in 2015.



Kevin Carroll (Irish) has worked in international development with Irish Aid, Trócaire and Concern. He retired from the Department of Foreign Affairs in 2014. He was appointed as a Trustee in 2021.



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.



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 Annual Compliance Form. In the Directors Report 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





St Patrick's Missionary Society
Central Leadership Team
P.O. Box 25269,
Lavington 00603,
KENYA
Email: spsgen@iol.ie



St Patrick's Missionary Society
Kiltegan,
Co Wicklow, W91 Y022,
IRELAND
Tel: 059 6473600
Email: office@spms.ie

WEBSITE: WWW.SPMS.ORG
