

St. Patrick's Missionary Society, Ireland



ANNUAL REPORT 2022



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.



Annual Report 2022

Contents

1	MISSION STATEMENT Society Leader CEO of SPMS Ireland
3	BRAZIL São Paulo
4	REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN Riwoto
5	SOCIETY CHAPTER 2022 New Leadership Team
6	NIGERIA SELL, Bauchi
7	MISSION MAP Where we work
9	REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN Riwoto
10	AFRICA MAGAZINE 90 years in print
11	FINANCIAL DATA
12	PROMOTION AND MISSION AWARENESS
13	GOVERNANCE

Christ's Church will continue to "go forth" towards new geographical, social and existential horizons, towards "borderline" places and human situations, in order to bear witness to Christ and His love to men and women of every people, culture and social status.

Pope Francis, Message for Mission Sunday 2022

Message from the Chairman of the Board of Trustees



In 2022 St Patrick's Missionary Society marked the 90th Anniversary of our foundation. Inspired by the Society's mission and the charisma of "Christ's Love Compels Us", we continue to witness with great joy the Good News of Hope and Healing to those in great need around the world especially in the communities where we work.

As missionaries we are sent to be a healing presence and beacons of hope where human needs are greatest. We endeavour to foster the values of the Gospel, justice and equality for all by offering equal opportunities for access to education, healthcare, and promoting human development geared towards restoration of a just and a free world devoid of socio-economic inequalities, adverse effects of climate change, violence and conflict. SPMS Ireland promotes various initiatives that enhance our missionary outreach programmes and alleviate the hardships and burdens of poverty. These include building rural schools and health facilities, promoting Laudato Si and environmental awareness, safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, and human trafficking awareness.

We are encouraged by 91 seminarians and 55 ordained members from Africa who continue to generously respond to the missionary call. SPMS Ireland continues to cater for their education, medical, and other pastoral needs. Likewise, our elder brothers in Kiltegan continue to support us through their prayers.

We remain indebted to all our friends and benefactors whose unflinching support give us renewed hope to go forward with greater courage and zeal for the future. I wish to thank my predecessor, Fr Victor Dunne for his service to this board.



Rev Richard Filima
Society Leader



Message from the CEO of SPMS Ireland

2022 was an exciting year for SPMS Ireland which rang in many changes. At the Society's delayed Chapter, for the first time in our history an African member was elected as the Society Leader, along with two others to the Leadership Team. Fr Richard Filima, our Society Leader, is the new chairperson of the Trustees of SPMS Ireland. This is a sign that our charity is maturing and fulfilling one of its aims in making the Church in Africa bloom. 2022 was a year of transition in local leadership too with the appointment of Pat Murphy as the new Regional Leader and CEO of SPMS Ireland and Kyran Murphy as the assistant Regional Leader. We are very grateful to the outgoing CEO, Fr Tomás O'Connor who laid the foundation for what was a new role when he took up the position.

The second half of 2022 saw the lifting of restrictions that were in place during Covid 19. This resulted in the resumption of activities and the return of visitors to the Kiltegan compound. The ministry in Slí an Chroí is growing, and the appointment of Michèle Sinnott as Director and Animator in March 2023 is giving the centre new energy and warmth. We had former members, Viatores Christi and our Lay volunteers coming for weekends in Slí an Chroí already this year.

While our focus in SPMS Ireland is the support of our missionaries in the countries where they work, the care of our ill and elderly members is also a major part of our work. Each year the number of members returning to our facility in Kiltegan increases. We had 16 deaths in 2022. The management of the Care Unit takes a lot of energy, and to maintain a high standard of care is our special priority. We are grateful to our benefactors who make our missionary work possible as we exercise great prudence in the use of their donations.



Rev Patrick Murphy
Irish District Leader





Fr Dermot Daly, Fr Kieran Ridge and the late Fr Seán Smith (1944-2023).

The Social Media Studio at Paróquia São João Batista, São Paulo, Brazil was set up during the Covid 19 pandemic when the parish started transmitting Mass and catechetical classes using Facebook and Zoom. They gained experience and built up a group and have expanded to now transmit interviews and Bible courses. The parish received a grant of €3,000 to buy new equipment.

The Educational Support Project at Paróquia Jesus Bom Pastor, São Paulo, Brazil gives extra schooling to about 170 children and adolescents after formal schooling which is only for a three-hour period. The project keeps them off the street, provides opportunities for activities such as drama, and supports their schooling. For many also the meal they receive is the only meal they get during the day. The parish received a grant of €7,000 for food expenses.



Republic of South Sudan

Fr Blessed Ejenavi, St Mary Magdalen Parish, Riwoto.
(Riwoto is in Eastern Equatoria state.)

The parish priest, Fr Blessed Ejenavi, outlines the need to renovate the parish church. “At least one decent place of worship is a need for our people. This is because they live through harsh realities of hunger, insecurity, lack of economic opportunities, extremely limited access to reliable healthcare among others. A decent place of worship is an avenue to feel the companionship and presence of God who heals, builds and is the source of all hope.”

Fr Blessed describes the outcome. “At the end, the Church reemerged as an icon of beauty. It was opened with great fanfare, dancing, and celebration. The opening of the Church in 2022 is one of the highlights of the year for most of the people of Riwoto. It is for most people, a place to go and feel the solace of God. The Christian Community of Riwoto is very grateful to St Patrick’s Missionary Society, and all benefactors, through whose help God’s Providential companionship is manifested to us.”



From the top: Church renovation in progress; parishioners preparing for the church dedication; the completed altar. Right: The exterior of the church during the renovation progress.

Society Chapter 2022

ST PATRICK'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY 13TH GENERAL CHAPTER, MAY 2022.

The Society's Chapter takes place every six years. It is a general meeting of representatives of all the Society's members to evaluate and plan for the following years. A new leadership team is also elected. It was due to happen in 2020 but was postponed many times due to the global pandemic. After two years of delays and much preparatory work it began on Sunday, May 1st 2022. Delegates (pictured below) from our eight Districts attended – Brazil, Ireland (includes USA), Central Africa, East Africa, Southern Africa, Great Britain, West Africa and Grenada.



Back row, from left: Patrick Kieren Esekon, Emmanuel Ihwo, Gabriel Dolan, Joe McCullough, Victor Dunne (Society Leader), Tomás O Connor, Cathal Moriarty, Dermot Daly, Frank Conlisk, Samuel Mwathi Gichanga, Pat Murphy, Richard Filima, Seamus O'Neill, Seán Doggett, David Walsh, Emmanuel Obi, Tim Redmond. Front row, from left: Kevin O'Hara, Stephen Kimani, Enda Kelly, Dermot Connolly, Bosco Kamau, facilitators Gabrielle Stuart RSM and Mary Harrington SUSC, David Chelimo, Neil Crombie, Michael Murphy, Raphael Mwenda, Seán Cremin, John Marren.



Right: The newly-elected Society Central Leadership Team. From left: Society Leader Fr Richard Filima, Assistant Leader Fr Seán Cremin, Patrick Kieren Esekon and Raphael Mwenda. Richard Filima is from Rivers State, Nigeria. He was ordained for

St Patrick's Missionary Society in 2008 and his first appointment was to Mato Grosso in Brazil. Afterwards he studied in Ireland and then ministered in South Africa and the UK. He attended the Chapter as the elected delegate from the District of Southern Africa. Seán Cremin is from Co Cork, Ireland. He was ordained in 1997 and ministered in Kenya. Patrick Esekon is from Turkana, Kenya. He was ordained in 2013 and ministered in Bauchi, Nigeria. Raphael Mwenda is from Minga, Eastern Zambia. He was ordained in 2014 and ministered in South Africa.

Nigeria

Fr Robert Psinion works with SELL (Sharing Education and Learning for Life) in Bauchi, Nigeria.

The SELL *Laudato Si'* project in Bauchi was established to address the problem of the gradual extinction of indigenous trees and natural savannah vegetation of this area in northeastern Nigeria. The project began conserving 37 varieties of indigenous trees, as well as varieties such as Royal Palm. More than 10,000 seedlings were grown successfully with over 5,000 distributed already. A 5,000 litre capacity water tank for the purpose of providing water for the trees and other plants within the SELL compound. Radio broadcasts were carried out in Globe FM and Bauchi State Radio Broadcasting Corporation to create awareness on the importance of nurturing the indigenous trees, care for the environment and proper waste management. The radio stations have a combined listenership of over 5 million people within and outside Bauchi State.



Fr Patrick Esekon, St Joseph's Parish, Kirikiri.

St Joseph's Parish, Kirikiri is situated in Apapa, near the mouth of the Lagos lagoon, famous for its naval base and high security prisons. The parish supports Youth and Women Empowerment through the establishment of a computer school and bakery. The *Jim Inglis Memorial Bakery* remembers Fr Jim English (1938-2018) who worked in the parish for many years. The bakery and the youth projects were initiated by Fr Patrick Esekon who was the parish priest of St Joseph's Parish. Patrick was elected for the Society Leadership Team in 2022. Fr Gastone Sakala (volunteer with St Patrick's) became the new parish priest of St Joseph's Parish and he will continue work on the projects.





Republic of South Sudan

Fr Tim Galvin, Riwoto.

The new secondary school in St Mary Magdalen Parish, Riwoto, opened in 2022 with its first intake of students. Pictured are teachers and staff at the new secondary school. As a qualified maths teacher, Fr Tim (last on the right) was also one of the staff and taught maths at the school. Maureen O'Dwyer (centre), Mission Development Officer for St Patrick's Missionary Society, visited the school and new health centre in Riwoto in October 2022. Sadly Fr Tim died in February 2023.

The parish is very committed to implementing the teaching of Pope Francis in his encyclical *Laudato Si'*. The first few months of 2022 were very hot and dry. Trees which were planted during the previous rainy seasons died, especially fruit trees, paw paw and mangoes and even some local tree seedlings. This was despite the fact that the trees were watered on a regular basis. It was very hot and there was no rain from October 2021 until April 2022. This area would usually get some rain in November/December. This drought and heat shows the effect of climate change and our need to do something. The parish still maintains a tree nursery where fruit trees, indigenous trees and neem trees are growing. In 2022 with the opening of the secondary school, many trees of different varieties were planted. The challenge now is to keep these trees alive until the rains come later in the year.

Paths have been created in the school grounds to allow the grass to grow during the rains and preserve it during the dry season. This helps in creating a greener environment. Flowers and plants have also been planted in the parish compound and in the primary school compound. Not only will this beautify the place but it will also create biodiversity.



Africa Over 90 Years in print...

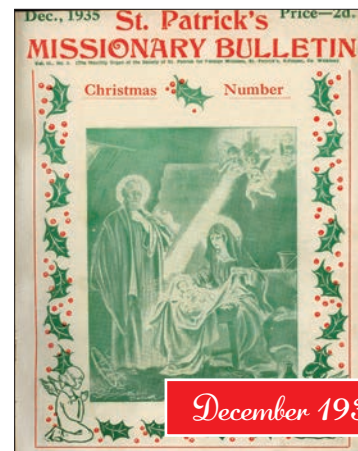
AFRICA magazine began life in June 1931, and has been published uninterrupted for the last ninety-one years. Initially it was known as “St Patrick’s Missionary Bulletin” and was started by our founder Msgr PJ Whitney. In the early years its purpose was clearly fundraising – to get the Society off the ground and finance the travel and well-being of the priests in Nigeria. As the number of members grew in Nigeria, and later in Kenya, accounts of their work and living conditions gained prominence. However from the earliest days the magazine had a flexible feel. Stories from other missionaries countries and from non-Society members began to appear. It highlighted the contributions of lay people and religious sisters to the missions. The cover of the December 1957 edition features a nun fixing a land rover. The November 2019 edition features a Medical Missionary of Mary sister flying an aeroplane in the 1960s! This issue was in celebration of their work as flying doctors in Kenya. Many lay and religious missionaries credit their going to the missions to such articles.

Over the years the content, appearance and production of the magazine has continually evolved. Because of the ingenuity of the founder it didn’t limit itself to religious topics even though it’s ethos and reason for being is religious. It embraced change. Still in its infancy, it featured a ‘red and green holly and berry motif’ i.e. colour, as early as 1935 in the December edition.

That adapting to new technology has continued to the present. The employment of the latest layout and communications tools means that two people can prepare each edition for printing in the Kiltegan office – something unimaginable 20 years ago. The content also has developed. Whilst the ethos is Catholic, articles are chosen to make good family reading and to keep the mission picture before readers attention.

Challenges have come from a changing world. Distribution is now mainly done by post and costs here continually increase. Similar for paper and printing. All printed media is losing readers and AFRICA is no exception. We will have to monitor how we can avail of the web and online possibilities. In 2022 we merged two issues, leaving a total of 8 per year. In 2023 a lay person will take over as editor for the first time.

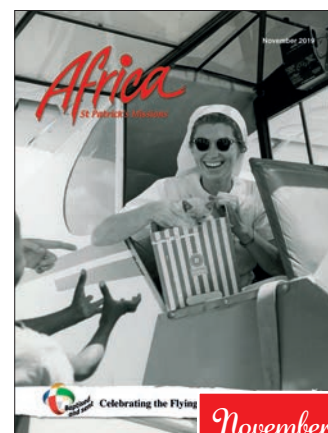
The magazine is still our principal way of keeping our name ‘out there’. It has a dedicated core of readers who remind us how they appreciate it. Many inform us that they pass it on to family and friends. It is aimed at a particular age/interest group who we feel support our work. It is very difficult to measure what the return is – much is indirect, i.e. not just subscriptions. The magazine is older than the Society and any radical changes would have to be seriously analysed beforehand.



December 1935



December 1957



November 2019

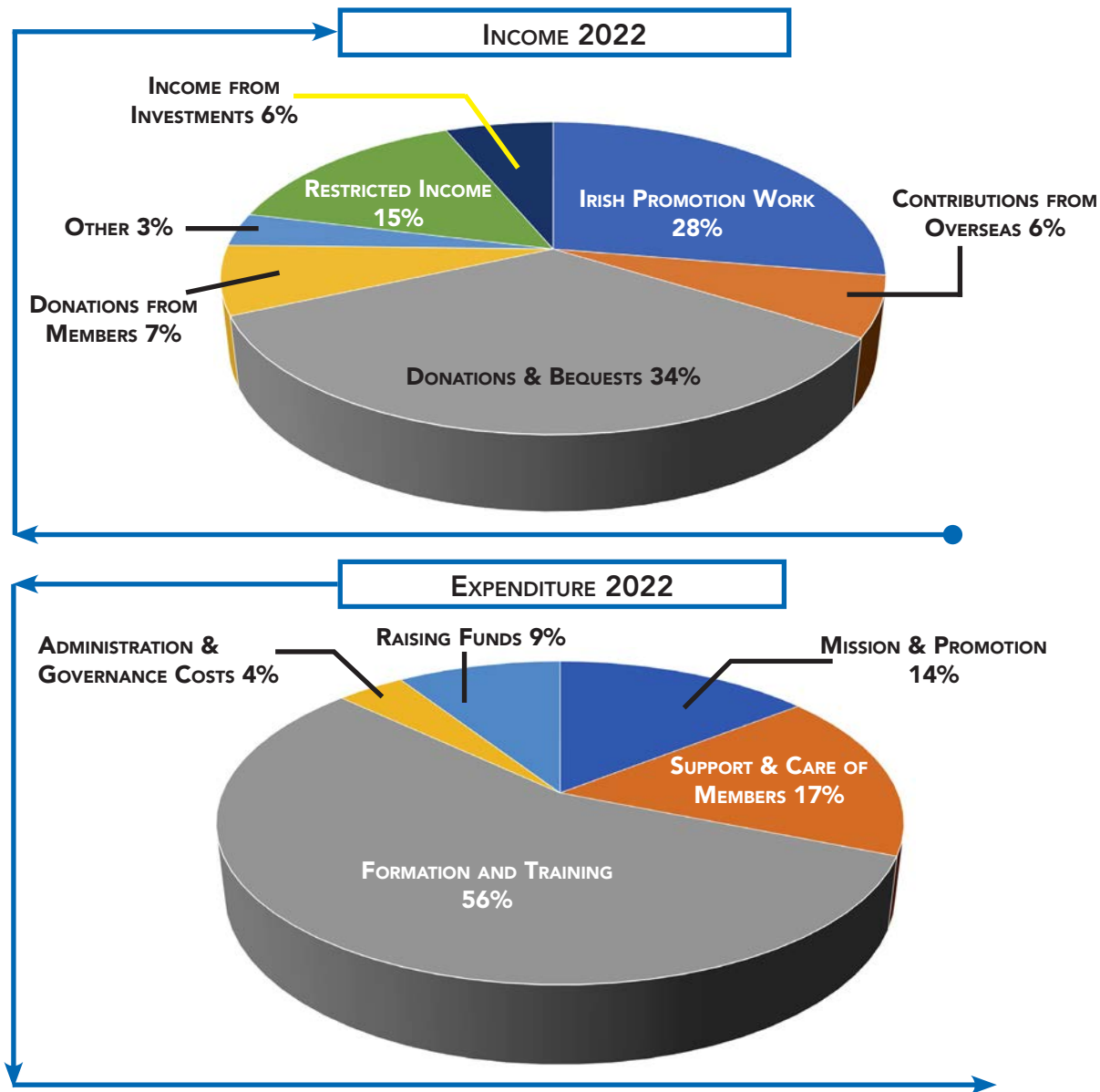


April 2022

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 2022 audited financial statements show an income of **€7.9 million** (2021 – €9.3 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 2021 to 2022 by 17%. There has been a 25% decrease in the number of donors in the last 6 years.
- Restricted Income is income that can only be used for particular purposes specified by donors.
- 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, this financial burden will increase and we are preparing for this increase in costs by judiciously maintaining our reserves.
- At the end of 2022 reserve funds had been designated for specific purposes as follows:

- Commitments to Ongoing Projects € 3m
- Property Fund €9.2m
- Overseas Support of Members €10m
- Mission Development Office €10m

Promotion and Mission Awareness

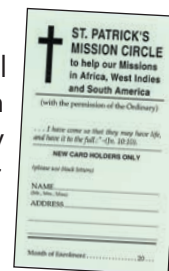
Parish Mission Awareness Programme

In 2022 we conducted the Parish Mission Awareness Programme in the Dioceses of Kerry and Dromore. There are fifty-four parishes in the Diocese of Kerry. We have many links with the Diocese over the years. In 1977 we began a mission partnership with Kerry when some of their priests went to work with us as volunteers in East Africa. Around the same time some Society priests went to work in the Diocese of Kerry. The Society is very well known in the Diocese and for that reason, among others, the response from both priests and people was very encouraging. We also visited the Diocese of Dromore in 2022 (seventeen parishes). While our links with Dromore are not as strong, the response we received was also very encouraging. We are grateful for the response in both Dioceses to our Mission Awareness Programme and for the generosity of the parishioners who enable us to carry on our missionary work.



We promote mission awareness by publishing eight issues per year of our *Africa* magazine. It has a circulation of 22,000 copies (per issue) and is distributed in Ireland, UK and USA.

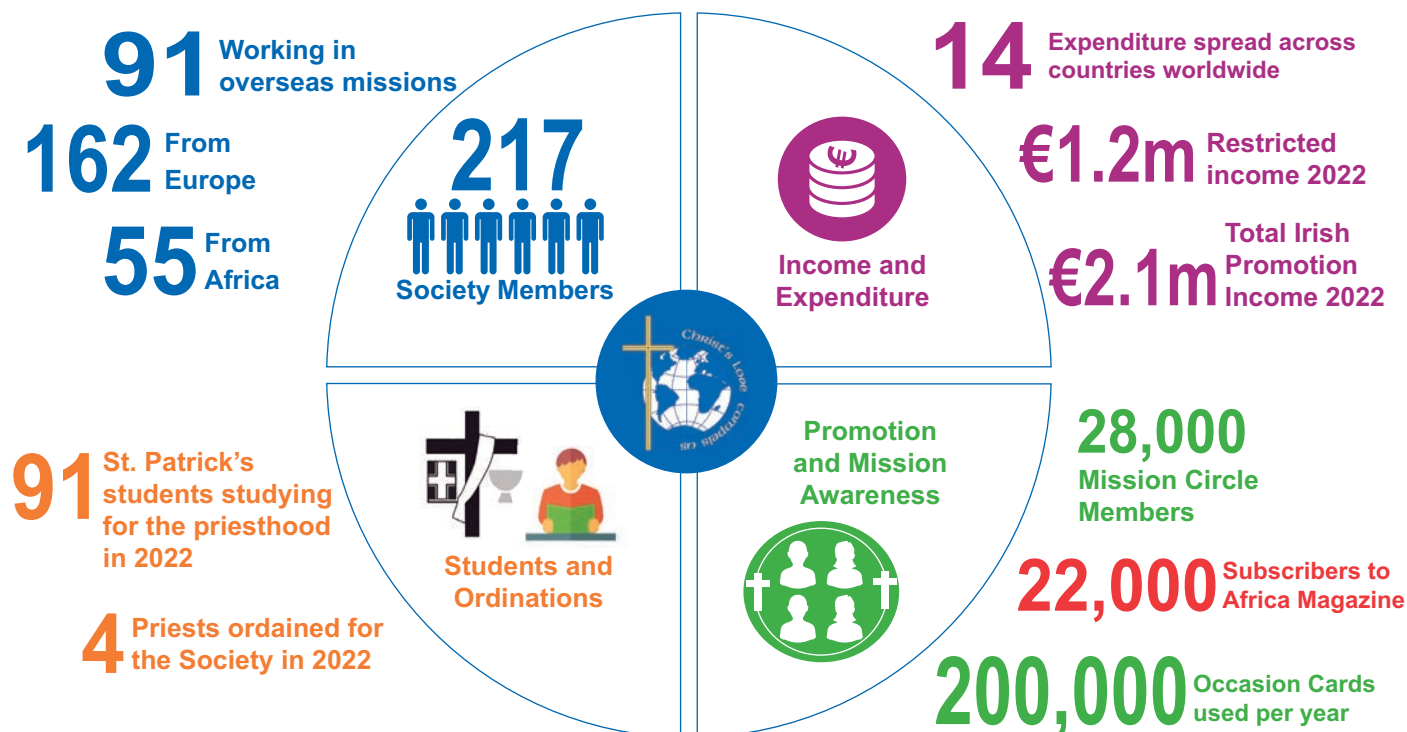
St. Patrick's Mission Circle began in the 1950s. As a member of our Mission Circle family, all family and friends, living and deceased, named on a Mission Circle card, are remembered in three daily Masses, monthly novenas and our daily prayers. Deceased members are especially remembered in November. 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.

Website and Social Media: 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.

Our Society at a glance in 2022:





St Patrick's Missionary Society Ireland is registered with the Charities Regulator in Ireland. RCN: 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. Richard Filima, Rev. Seán Cremin, Rev. Seamus O'Neill (Secretary), Kevin Carroll, Rev. David Walsh, Rev. John O'Donovan, Rev. Seamus O'Neill, Rev. John Marren



Richard Filima (Nigerian, resident in Kenya) is a member of SPMS since 2007. He ministered in Brazil and South Africa where he worked in formation. He was elected Society Leader and appointed Chairman of the Trustees in 2022.



Seán Cremin (Irish, resident in Kenya) is a member of SPMS since 1996. He was Regional Leader for East Africa from 2014 to 2022. He is the current Assistant Society Leader and was appointed Trustee in 2022.



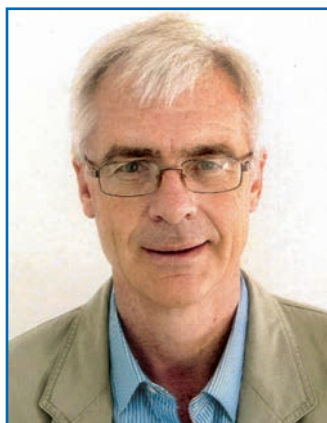
Seamus O'Neill (Irish, resident in Ireland) is a member of SPMS since 1973. He worked in education, leadership and pastoral ministry. He was appointed as a Trustee in 2015.



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



John O'Donovan (Irish, resident in Ireland) is a member of SPMS since 1993. He worked in pastoral settings in Malawi and Zambia. He has worked in the Bursar's office in Kiltegan since 2021. He serves as Secretary to the Trustees.



Victor Dunne (Irish, resident in Kenya) 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. Victor retired in 2022 on completion of his term.



John Marren (Irish, resident in Kenya) 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. John retired in 2022 on completion of his term.



We are compliant with the Charities Governance Code and have completed the Annual Compliance Form. In the Trustees' Report for 2022 we continue to observe 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.



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



St Patrick's Missionary Society Ireland is a registered charity (RCN 20004231).

We report to the Charities Regulatory Authority (CRA) and we submit our **Annual Report and full audited Financial Statements and Trustees' Report to the CRA annually.**

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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