

## Financial Review

In chapter 6 of John's Gospel, when it came to meal-time one particular day, we read how Jesus provided above and beyond what the people required, Not only did everyone get fed from the five loaves and two fish brought along by a little boy for his supper, but we are told that there were 12 baskets of leftovers! God loves to give abundantly, and that has been our experience at IBI again this past year. All needs have been met, even when it appeared like there were 'just' a few loaves and fish available. In the same way as the little boy gave what he had in order for Jesus to bless so many, IBI has many supporters who give sacrificially to IBI, month by month and year by year, and we want to thank them sincerely for their partnership with us in the Gospel and their investment in our students again this year.

Our operational income for 2007-08 was €455,700 a surplus of c. €16,000 over our expenditure of €439,570. The summer months are always the leanest time for income at IBI, and it was great to have some funds in hand at the end of the financial year (July 31<sup>st</sup>) to see us through to September. As we look to the year ahead, particularly with all the economic 'doom and gloom' forecast in Ireland at present, and the challenge of meeting this year's budget, it is good to reflect again on God's faithfulness and goodness.

### Ulysses House Development Plan

A big 'Thank you' also to those who contributed towards our Ulysses House Development Plan this summer. All of the \$40,000 (€25,000) required to release the \$80,000 from the American Foundation which had pledged 2:1 support for this project came in, and the work has now been completed. We are very happy with the result and believe the new facilities and equipment provided will serve IBI well for many years to come. We look forward to showing you around whenever you can visit.



We continually thank God for the facilities He has provided for us here at Ulysses House, which are such a blessing. Pray with us that we will be good stewards of all that He has given.

Dawn Langrell



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Cheques payable  
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## Prayer and Praise

- Praise God for the wonderful celebration we all enjoyed at our graduation ceremony on Sunday 28 September. It was a very colourful occasion this year with all our graduates and faculty gownned. Also it was the first graduation where we had both BA and MA graduates conferring.
- Please pray for all our graduates exiting from the college as they go out to serve the Lord in new ventures or return to their continuing areas of ministry. Pray that the Lord would bless them abundantly and that they would feel better equipped for each of their different ministry opportunities.
- We also had the pleasure at Graduation of introducing our new students and encouraging those who are continuing their studies at IBI. We are now several weeks into the new term, Please pray for the students in their studies.
- Pray that with the Lord's help we can create a warm Christian community here at IBI, where the students can learn from faculty and each other and where they are encouraged to develop spiritually.
- We have some new teachers joining the team this year. Pray especially for Richard Mc Connell as he prepares to teach Church History for the first time, to the Certificate evening class. Anne Somerville would also be very grateful for your prayers as she teaches the course in Study Skills for the first time this semester.

Student Association of the Irish Bible Institute  
*A Life-Long Relationship*  
ibi cáirde

Calling all Past Students:  
**Our next Cáirde Conference**  
(past students association)  
will be held at IBI on **Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> November**  
from 12 noon to 5pm  
**Linda Basdeo** will speak on  
**'Forgiveness'**  
Dawn is taking bookings for this event now  
Cost: **Free to Cáirde members**  
**€15 to past students**  
who are non-members

# IBI Digest



Autumn 2008

## A High Calling

*'You are Israel's teacher and you do not understand these things?'*

*'Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives inside you?'*

One of my roles at IBI is interviewing students applying to begin a course. It is fascinating, and often humbling, hearing stories of why students want to study here. Again and again we hear 'I want to know God better' or 'I want to understand God's Word more deeply' or 'I want to be better equipped in ministry'. And since IBI is committed to 'excellence in biblical education', it is easy to assume that these things will happen automatically.

Well I hope so! But as I've reflected on theological education, the more convinced I am that the sort of desired outcomes above do not 'just happen' as a by-product of being in a classroom. For example, I suspect many of us, consciously or unconsciously, have the following model in our heads of how learning happens: (1) the teacher is the 'expert' who has access to specialist knowledge (2) he/she 'fills' students with that knowledge in class (3) the student somehow learns as the information is received (4) it is then assumed that this learning is then integrated into his/her life.

Here's the rub. The overwhelming evidence is that this sort of 'information transfer' has little value in deepening faith, effecting changes in thinking, stimulating maturity or seeing transformation in behaviour. What then does it mean to have learnt something? Here's a definition I've found helpful. It comes from Ken Bain, a Harvard professor who located the best teachers he could find across all sorts of subjects and researched what makes them so good: *'Real learning produces lasting change in how people think, act and feel'*.

I was struck by how this sort of learning is profoundly Christian.



Back row (l-r): Stephen McConnell (HECert), Kenny Morrison (HECert), Karen Welsh (HECert), Murna Lappin (HECert), Rosemary Lindsay (MA), and Roseline Esuku (HEDip).  
4th row (l-r): Cormac Shaw (BA), William Patton (HECert), Jonathan Reid (MA), Sarah Kingston (HEDip), Ruth Burns (MA) and Sharon Wood (MA).  
3rd row (l-r): Paddy Grant (BA), Ana Mullan (BA), Sheggi Sevcova (HECert), Susan Hill (HECert) and Audrey Reilly (BA).  
2nd row (l-r): Susie Spurgeon (BA), Susan Fry (HECert), Kevin Barrett (HECert), Grace Percy (HECert), Aoife Lewis (HEDip), Lucy Kelly (BA) and Kieron Kelly (BA).  
Front row (l-r): Jonathan Schuster, Jacob Reynolds, Joan Singleton, Steven Singleton, Derek Tidball and Patrick Mitchel.  
Also graduated with HECert: John McCarthy, Gerry O'Keefe and John O' Donnell.

In the Bible to 'know' never involves just mastering information. Nicodemus 'knew' a lot of theology but did not understand that he needed to be born again of the Spirit. The Corinthians thought they knew a lot, but in effect knew nothing because they had failed to integrate their identity as being God's temple with behaviour characteristic of people of the Spirit.

So effective Christian teaching has to hold together a holistic form of 'knowing', far beyond mere information, resulting in learning that will transform thinking, change feelings and lead to different lives by the power of his Spirit - all for the pleasure of glorifying God. For this sort of learning to happen, *much is required of teachers* (which is why teaching is such a high calling in the New Testament).

Bain found that the best teachers are those who are passionate about their subject and who believe in the potential of their students. They teach individuals, not courses. They shape their courses around what changes they hope to see in people, not just what material they want to cover. They see assignments as opportunities to enable learning and don't pretend to have all the answers. These teachers foster a learning community for students to make connections to real life issues in relationship with others.

But the teacher can't do it all. The student also needs to be motivated, committed to developing a Christian mind, open to questioning deeply held assumptions and trying new ways of doing things, willing to think self-critically and focused on growing spiritually as well as intellectually.

Teachers and students won't always get it right, but our prayer is that IBI is more and more a place where these sorts of teachers and students come together to form graduates who can reproduce this type of learning in their own lives and ministries for years to come and so strengthen the church. Please pray for our teachers in their crucial role and for our students - that they would be changed for life by what they learn here.

Patrick Mitchel

## Our Graduates Stories continue ...



At Graduation, two students were asked to speak about their time at IBI. Here is what they had to say.

"Hi. My name is Susan Hill and I have just finished the 2 year Diploma course. I am originally from Wexford where I have been working as an optometrist.

The reason I chose to study in IBI was because I knew Jesus as my Saviour since I was a

little girl but somehow I had not progressed in my knowledge of the bible or my love for the Lord for several years. I craved to know and love him better and I did not know how to do this in the rut of work and living that I had somehow created for myself.

Going to IBI was a huge breath of fresh air. I had the privilege of meeting like-minded people of my own age who were struggling with similar issues to myself. It was such a blessing to spend a whole 2 days every week with my new friends, learning to love God more through his Word and having him open my eyes to his amazing ways.

Encouragement is the key word that comes to mind when I think of the time I spent in IBI. I believe God had me there to be encouraged and in turn to be an encouragement. I know God had me spend time with people who inspired me to start living in the Spirit; to step out in faith and see what God does when we truly surrender to his ways. I sought him with all of my heart and he lifted me out of my dull life, planted me away from all my much-loved family and friends and created a life for me in Co.Clare where I have lived a life of adventure for the Lord. It has been extremely difficult at times (and still is) but during this period of transition I believe God had me going to IBI to be supported, helped and prayed for by friends, lecturers and staff alike.

My one piece of advice for anyone considering going to IBI is this: make sure you focus on getting to know your Saviour and not just knowing about him. Seek him with all your heart. Ask God's Spirit to intervene radically in your life so that your life can truly glorify God. The God who created us is not a God of mediocrity- don't put him in a box and limit the impact he can have on others through the life he has given you."

## New member of the team



We are delighted to announce that Ana Mullan has joined the team as part-time librarian. Ana has just completed the BA degree and will bring enthusiasm, a love of books and a first-hand knowledge of student experience to the job. Do pray for her as she settles into her new role.

## Marvellous Marva



Marva Dawn

Marva Dawn was our guest speaker at the 2008 IBI Summer Institute in June. Marva would probably not like the adjective in the title of this piece, but she was marvellous! She is author of 21 books and internationally known theologian, but more than this she blessed us with her delightful presence and servant heart for the church. The theme was 'Worship and/or Witness?: truly living our calling in and to the world'. This was a broad and rich discussion covering a lot of ground relating to the new era of the missional church and much, much more. The Q&A sessions were wonderful in themselves - it was a privilege for us to benefit from Marva's wisdom and learning, passionately and yet graciously shared in the midst of physical weakness. We were given plenty to think about and I, for one, am still working through implications of what was said for local church life. If you haven't read any of Marva's books, she is a companion worth getting to know. The new compressed format of 2 full days worked well and is one we plan to repeat next year.

Patrick Mitchel



"I'd like to really thank IBI for putting the Masters programme together. The last three years have been thoroughly enjoyable as well as rewarding and challenging.

As I think back over them one of my abiding memories of the course is of the recurring question, 'How does this relate to the Irish context?' All the essay questions and discussions eventually came down to that. So whether we were looking at Leadership, Mission, Communication or Hermeneutics we were encouraged to look at it through the lens of the Irish church or Irish society. That I think was invaluable and is why, as a course, it is unparalleled in terms of preparing one for ministry in Ireland.

The Masters coming on stream three years ago was great timing for me. I was moving from student work into church work and was looking for training but didn't really want to have to leave Ireland and have the expense of three years away in Bible College. There were a number of things which I really appreciated about the course:

- It was tailored for those involved in ministry and so could be used as 'on the job' training. So I have been involved with a church in Wexford as assistant pastor, while studying and getting training at the same time.
- The structure - of one week blocks of teaching for each module spread throughout the year - meant that it was very accessible for those of us outside of Dublin.
- The interaction with others on the course from other churches around the country, meant there was a great mix of perspectives and also a new network of friends involved in similar ministry situations.

One aspect of the course which I probably appreciate more now than I did at the time, was the whole 'reflective practice' element. That forced me not to allow what I was learning to remain abstract and unrelated but to ground it in my ministry. So I was encouraged to get feedback on my preaching from within the Wexford church and to reflect on our leadership training in the church as well. This was particularly helpful during my dissertation. I spent the year thinking about how the local church relates to the local community in social action while, at the same time, daydreaming about how our church in Wexford could pursue opportunities in that area - and now we are.

I think the Masters is a quality programme and I look forward to seeing its impact on the Irish church."

Jonathan Reid

## A new story begins for commencing students ...



### Evening Class Students

Back row (l-r): Hugh Carleton, Kieran Kelly, Alina Gavrilas, Jonny Lindsay, Michelle Foster, Bertilla Keane, Melanie Webb, and David Gardner. 2nd row (l-r): Eung Mook Choi, Breda Curran, Jennifer Power, Rebecca Gasataya, Stephanie Kingston, and Debbie Reid. 3rd row (l-r): Chantelle Fletcher, Ruth Doran, Rachel Bow, Abigael Bailie, Cynthia Wong, Lorna Carson, Therese Shelly and Aideen Fahy. Front row (l-r): Radu Gavrilas, Matthew Kuruvilla, Gareth Williams, Jeff Sweetman and Ross Campbell. Also taking evening class, but not pictured are Patrick Griffin, JoJo Geroche, and Derek Singleton.

### Students in process



### Certificate Students

Back row (l-r): Gordon Irons, John Branigan, Ben Stafford, Paul Keegan, and Richard Miles. Middle row (l-r): Anne Marie Gibson, Julie Hayes, Victor Lopez, Emma Harper, Geraldine Walsdorf and Gerry Montgomery. Front row (l-r): Sandra Cantwell, Sandra McDonagh, Ruth Francois, Amy Gilbert, Sarah Laughlin and Blathnaid Heffernan.



### Diploma and Degree Students

Back row (l-r): Stephen Wilson, Charlie Mills, Richard Cronin, Simon Kilpatrick, Michael Briggs and David Blevins. Middle row (l-r): Marie Quinlan, Valerie Hilliard, Sarah Cunningham, Lisa-Monique Avenstrup and Jill Harper. Front row (l-r): Heather Browne, Anne Mc Donald, Jamie Gilbert and Tim Coles. Also taking Dip/Degree, but not pictured are Judi Barry, Andrew Gill, George O' Callaghan and Jonny Somerville. Also in process is Linda Basdeo.