



AITB 16 Days of Activism 2022 Report

Across Ireland the 2022 *16 Days 365 Global Day of Action* saw the return to 'in person' activities. All dioceses liaised and supported domestic abuse services in their area.

RTE 16 Days service: The RTE 16 Days service broadcast on Sunday 4th December was very well received by the general public. Bishop Pat Storey, Canon Robert Deane and members led the service whilst Worldwide President, Sheran Harper, spoke and shared experiences from around the world and urged members to continue with the 16 Days 365 campaign.

16 Days highlights from across the dioceses:

Armagh: *16 Days' Breakfast* in Armagh where members and guests were captivated by a survivor's story, and the PSNI reiterated the supports available for victims.

Cashel, Ferns & Ossory: Global Day of Action service in All Saint's Carnew, and the launch 'Walk a Mile in My Shoes' exhibition.

Clogher: '*A Walk and a Talk*' on the Colebrooke Estate with PCSP (Policing and Community Safety Partnership) and Fermanagh Women's Aid, The Aisling Centre, Enniskillen, An Garda Síochána, and Tearmann, based in Monaghan. PCSP spoke to those who chose not to walk and remained in the Hall.

Connor has 3 year rolling cycle the focus in 2022 was on branch activities. Branches were issued with a 16 Day Challenge entitled "Time to Talk/Time to Act". Branches looked at the story of Tamar and reflected on how this is mirrored in the experiences of women in the 21st Century.

Cork, Cloyne & Ross: *Souls of Our Shoes Exhibition* in Carraigaline, Co.Cork.

Down & Dromore hosted a coffee morning in St. Finnian's Hall, where they promoted *Safe Church*. Safe Church training is planned with a number of parishes in March 2023.

Derry & Raphoe hosted a service where Ruth Garvey-Williams thanked Mothers' Union for "leading the way in the church on this island" in responding to domestic violence. Two secondary schools were delighted to welcome back MU for 2 assemblies and 2 workshops with A level and Leaving Certificate students.

Dublin & Glendalough: hosted an in-person seminar entitled '*Understanding Gender Based Violence*' with Professor Pat Barker, Counsellor, Dublin Rape Crisis Centre and Lydia Monds, Education Advisor, Bishop's Appeal

16 Days Nightly broadcasts. Each broadcast consisted of a presentation by speakers from 16 different agencies associated with women and family services, followed by prayers led by MU members. The YouTube Videos are available on MU Dublin & Glendalough YouTube channel for continued viewing.

Kilmore, Elphin & Ardagh: A "Meet Together" in The Bush Hotel in Carrick-on-Shannon. Ann Howard addressed the gathering and introduced Liz Greer, who read a moving survivor's story.

Meath & Kildare: Athlone Union of Parishes took part in the autumn sessions of *'Equipping the Church to Take Action and end Domestic Abuse'*. They led a very effective campaign in the community during the 16 Days and are now taking action to coincide with The Gardaí **'Go Purple Day'** on Friday 28th April. The MU *'Souls of Our Shoes Exhibition'* will be part of this weekend of activities.

Limerick & Killaloe: Canon Jane Galbraith led a very moving vigil in the Methodist Church, Roscrea, where stations relating to read texts from the bible and stories from people affected by GBV be from at home and abroad.

Tuam: Rev Andy Pierce led a thought provoking service in Rathbarron Church, followed by further information and discussion in relation to 16 Days afterwards in the hall. A Church Army evangelist was hoping to use the Irish 16 Days Prayer Diary in her work and outreach.

In relation to 16 Days 365 feedback one concern was raised –

How do we interact with our local domestic abuse service?

The 16 Days 365 committee recommend personal engagement, engagement of the whole parish, and suggest MU Chaplain be involved.

THANKS

Our thanks to each diocese for their excellent outreach and support in 2022. Keeping the example of Christ, and in so doing, keeping momentum and positivity going is key to our continued outreach in this area. In 2023 may we look back and thank God for what we have achieved so far and look forward with positive vision to the future.

With the PSNI answering a call in relation to Domestic Abuse every 16 minutes, it is a sore reminder that domestic abuse is very prevalent in every community. Wherever there is domestic abuse there are men, women and children – survivors, perpetrators, bystanders, domestic services personnel and volunteers together with our emergency services personnel – each deserving of prayer, God's love, our love and our compassion. Yet we do have a voice

May the God of Eve teach you to dance.

May the God of Hagar bring you comfort in the desert.

May the God of Miriam bring companions to you when you struggle.

May the God of Deborah teach you courage for your battles.

May the Christ who knew Mary and Martha show you the way of balance.

May the Christ who healed the bent-over woman heal your pain.

May the Christ of Mary Magdala send you out to proclaim your story.

In the name of Christ who is the memory, hope and authority of the future.

Adapted from a worship created by Jane Stranz for the World Council of Churches

'Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.' Galatians 6:9

Jacqui Armstrong, 16 Days 365 Coordinator, February 2023