

He restores my soul

## Dear Friends

In our journey together through the twenty third psalm we come this month to words that have been used throughout the centuries to comfort those who mourn. Countless people have been strengthened and sustained by them as they have approached death or as they have watched someone they love die. But there is even more to these words than that.

The road has its long periods of ordinary everyday living, where the nitty gritty of restoration is worked at and lived out. It has its moments of elation and huge joy, but it also has other times when danger is in the air, when an unnatural weariness threatens to consume us, when people, events or particular situations can be used by the unseen enemy in an attempt to discourage, to make us doubt the road we travel and the one who leads us, and to seek to persuade us to give up. We have all encountered such times, both individually and collectively. We cannot welcome them. To do so would be approaching the masochistic. It is usually in retrospect that we find in them a stark confirmation that we are on the right road and we can see more clearly the subtle or more blatant purpose behind what we have been going through. However, it's too easy to over-spiritualise such experiences and even romanticize about them. The identifiable and awesome serenity, won at great cost, does not tell about the despair, the dereliction, the sense of abuse and betrayal, the isolation and the pain. The road to such freedom is long, and there is no easy way to travel, no shortcut. We know, from this side of Easter that the road doesn't end with Good Friday, but Friday has to come before Sunday. That's the point where we would so often be tempted to turn away, because what is up ahead is too frightening; that is, until something or Someone bigger and more gripping than our fear seizes us, and we know we

*"If I should walk in the valley of darkness, no evil will I fear. You are there with your rod and your staff; with these you give me comfort."*



must go on no matter what. *"Even when I walk through the dark valley of death, I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me, your rod and your staff protect and comfort me."* Sheila Cassidy, in her book 'Good Friday People' talks of those who walk such a road: *"So there they go together along the road, priests and people, nuns and revolutionaries, archbishops and folksingers, schoolboys and fallen women. And as they walk they will, each in their own good time, arrive at*

*their Kairos moment, the point of choice, of decision, of a stiffening of the sinews because danger is in the air and there is no turning back."* We have, in some small measure, experienced one or two such kairos moments, but perhaps our greatest ones are up ahead. As we keep on keeping on, we know that there is no turning back. We have, for better or for worse, crossed our particular individual and collective Rubicons. Of course there will be times

when we are afraid and, if there are not, then maybe we're not as far along the road as we thought we were. But courage is very different from being unafraid. Courage is being afraid and yet going ahead anyway. That courage comes from the knowledge that even in the dark valley of death, God is close beside us, protecting us, bringing his comfort at unexpected moments. *"If I should walk in the valley of darkness, no evil will I fear. You are there with your rod and your staff; with these you give me comfort."*

For those of you who are finding the going tough just now, may that 'comfort' be yours.

## Ruth

**Open House**  
**every Wednesday**  
**from 12 - 2.00 p.m.**  
**All welcome**



# Reflection Day LENT

Saturday 11th March 2006  
2.00 pm - 6.00 pm  
Restoration House

## The Voice of the Prophet for a New Ireland

Facilitator: Fr Miceal O'Neill O.Carm.  
Board of Directors Restoration Ministries

Fr Miceal O'Neill has been associated with Restoration Ministries since its beginning. At present he is prior of the community in Terenure College Dublin. Miceal has served on the General Council of Carmelites in Rome for 12 years. One of his chief areas of interest is Justice & Peace. He is a gifted communicator and we are looking forward to having him share with us as we begin this season of Lent.

## HOSPITALITY EVENING

24th March 2006

After Dinner Speaker: Nuala O'Loan  
*Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland*

Invitation Only

These evenings are organised to introduce new people to the organisation and to each other. If you are interested in bringing some new people here please phone the office for details.



### Contact us

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## Dates For Your Diary



### Monthly Meeting

Monday 27 February  
at 8.00 pm



### Reflection Day LENT

Saturday 11th March  
2.00 pm - 6.00 pm



### Hospitality Evening

Friday 24 March  
At 7.30 for 8.00 pm