



Dear Friends

I am delighted to have this opportunity to say a huge thank you to the big family that is Restoration Ministries. What a wonderful surprise it was for me to discover that what I thought was just another end of year meeting was actually that many of you had come together to celebrate my retirement. For those of you who could not be there, all I can say is that I was overwhelmed by the numbers who attended, the gifts I received and the kindnesses expressed by so many. When I got home I said to my family "Why am I leaving this employment and all those wonderful people?"

Of course one doesn't belong to an organisation like Restoration Ministries and just walk away. Sometimes other influences dictate where we go in life's journey but there is one certainty and that is that I am not the same person I was when I joined the organisation some 13 years ago. I have travelled widely both internally and externally and will, I hope, continue to do so.

As a young girl of 16, in my first employment, I met a boy whom I liked and over some months, as we got to know each other, it was becoming obvious how much we enjoyed each other's company. July came and one day, as we approached the 12th, he explained to me that for the next week he would not be talking to me as I was a Catholic and he was a Protestant and he could not be seen associating with me during July! These words shaped my thinking for some time. For many years I believed I would need to give up *my* heritage to be accepted.

One night, some years before I became involved in Restoration Ministries, I heard Ruth speak in St Anne's Catholic Church. One of the things she said was, "You don't need to give up your identity to be reconciled with those who are from a different tradition." I heard loud and clear what Ruth said and slowly I began to realise that, if I took these words on board they would allow me the freedom

to choose how I was going to live my life here in Northern Ireland.

Around the time I heard Ruth speak, I was beginning to realise that it was more important for me to be part of the solution to the Northern Ireland situation as opposed to being part of the problem. I wanted my children to be able to answer their children if and when they might ask "What did nana do over those 30 odd years?" Now all of us who live in Northern Ireland and have embarked on this 'reconciliation journey' know that this is no fast track to peace. Just as you begin to believe you have arrived then someone or some event in the ministry will challenge your thinking and once again you have choices to make as to how you will respond or how you need to examine your own perspectives and/or belief systems.

Every single person can do something to make a difference; Restoration Ministries has given me such an opportunity. It has opened many doors to allow me to embrace this journey of reconciliation. I am truly grateful to all those I have met over the past thirteen years - to the Directors who trusted me with the job, to Rose and Ruth who listened and encouraged me, to the volunteers who helped me, to all the 'friends' who befriended me and to those who shared their personal stories with me. I entered the organisation confident of all the things I could do for it and left it, in all humility, realising all the things that it has done for me.

Eithne



Dates for your diary

Monthly Meeting

Monday 28th September 2009
at 8.00 pm



Shirley Bowers comes from Huntingdon in England, the birth place of Oliver Cromwell. Based on her own experience of God's healing she was led to explore and undertake a journey of reconciliation for the deep hurts caused by Cromwell to Ireland and its people. Her book 'From History to Hope; A Journey of Healing and Reconciliation' tells her remarkable story.

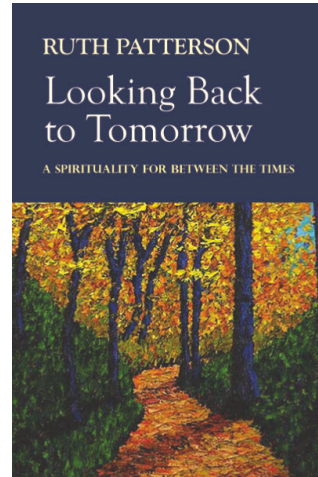
For further information go to:
<http://www.ariseministries.co.uk>

Book Launch

Thursday 24th September 2009
at 7.30 pm

Addressing the current period of flux and change that we find ourselves in, economically, socially and personally, Ruth shows the path to awakening belief, pointing to some of the timeless truths from the storylines of yesterday that can nurture our spirituality in this present in-between time and link us to the tomorrow of that new creation, towards

which everything is reaching. In this way Ruth hopes that we can be the bridge 'between the times'.



Announcements

In the last newsletter we paid tribute to Arthur. In this issue with a deep sense of rejoicing interlaced with sadness we announce his death. Arthur died on August 28th inhospital. His funeral on September 1st was a thanksgiving for a life of faithful service and was attended by many friends of Restoration Ministries.

Rose always called him 'the Father of the House' - and so he was. My favourite and abiding memory of Arthur is that of his evening ritual each day before returning home to Dromore. He would go around the entire outside of the house and of the property, anointing doorposts and gateposts and praying protection over the whole place, over me and over the work. I like to think that, in the communion of saints, in his Father's house, he is doing it still.

Ruth

We are also saddened by the news of the death of another of our dear friends of the ministry - John Treasure. John and his wife Paddy have been our encouragers and supporters over many years and we pray for Paddy and their family comfort, hope and peace at this difficult time.

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