

**THE FOCOLARE TRUST NI**  
**ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

**McDONALD O'NEILL & CO**  
**CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS**

# THE FOCOLARE TRUST NI

## CONTENTS

	<b>PAGE</b>
General Information	2
Trustees Report	3 – 6
Independent Examiner’s Report	7
Statement of Financial Activities	8
Balance Sheet	9
Notes to the Statement of Financial Activities	10 - 11

**THE FOCOLARE TRUST NI**

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Trustees**

Patricia O'Kelly  
Gerry Burns  
Irene Jovaras  
Mary McKinley  
Junita Majury  
Emmanuel Robert McGivern

**Administrative address**

10 Harberton Drive  
BELFAST  
BT9 6PE  
Northern Ireland

**Accountants**

McDonald O'Neill & Co.  
Chartered Accountants  
5 Union Buildings  
Union Place  
DUNGANNON  
Co. Tyrone  
BT70 1DL

**Bankers**

Ulster Bank  
University Road Branch  
91/93 University Road  
BELFAST  
BT7 1NG

**Charity Number**

NIC102512

**Inland Revenue Tax Reference**

XT21933

# **THE FOCOLARE TRUST NI**

## **TRUSTEES REPORT**

### **Structure, Governance & Management in Northern Ireland**

The charity was established in Northern Ireland under a trust deed dated 4 January 2010.

The trustees are assisted in the planning of the programme of activities by an Extended Focolare group.

### **Charitable Status**

The Trust has been accepted as a charity for tax purposes by the Inland Revenue. The HMRC reference number is: -

XT21933

The Trust has been registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland from 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2015 under the Charity number:-

NIC102512

### **Statement of Compliance**

In setting our objectives and planning our activities for the year the trustees have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit to ensure that the activities have helped to achieve the charity's purposes and provide a benefit to the beneficiaries.

### **Principal Activities**

The Focolare Movement is an international organization that began in Italy in 1943 and is now active on all five continents. As an ecclesial movement, it is open to collaborating with people of all faiths or without any faith background. The movement's core aim is to contribute to unity in all areas of life, guided by the gospel message "May they all be one" (Jn 17:21). The headquarters are in Rocca di Papa outside Rome, with operations managed through regional areas that support each other through the international sharing of goods and resources.

### **Activities in Northern Ireland**

In Northern Ireland, the Focolare Trust supports community building among people from diverse cultural and faith backgrounds. The spirituality of unity equips individuals with skills for peacebuilding and reconciliation. Focolare Northern Ireland is closely linked with its counterparts in the Republic of Ireland, co-organizing island-wide events. Focolare centres located in Belfast, Dublin, and Properpous, County Kildare serve as hubs for promoting and coordinating Focolare life and activities within the wider local community.

Focolare members are actively involved in their local churches and communities, working to build bridges across communities and living out the gospel's message of

## **THE FOCOLARE TRUST NI**

unity. Their efforts range from supporting refugees to working with youth, parish and diocesan groups and university chaplaincies.

In December 2023, the Focolare Movement celebrated its 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary. In Belfast a catholic mass attended by members of several denominations, followed by a light lunch was held in Holy Family Church on the Limestone Road.

An informal walking group inspired by Focolare values meets monthly to engage with people from different cultural backgrounds, fostering friendship and belonging. This group is expanding its outreach to asylum seekers and migrants through open afternoons and held an international cultural night in September 2023.

### **Formation and Promotion of Unity**

Focolare's commitment to evangelization begins with its own members. Through the international centres, the organization produces and distributes leaflets with commentary on the monthly "Word of Life" (a phrase from scripture to live by) and a related daily motto on social media throughout Ireland. These materials form the basis for actions and shared experiences of living out God's Word. The Focolare Trust NI is working to increase its presence on social media, developing content for its website, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn.

The Focolare Trust NI organizes monthly Word of Life meetings, women's lunch groups, and clergy meetings to foster community and sharing among people of different backgrounds. It facilitates the sharing and redistribution of goods to people in need.

Since the pandemic, meetings have been conducted face-to-face or in a hybrid format, allowing greater participation. An annual highlight is the intergenerational gathering which again took place in April 2023 in Dungarvan, Co. Waterford, on the theme, "Let's Connect With God, with Each Other, with Nature and with Society".

### **Cross-Community Initiatives**

The Focolare Trust NI promotes and supports various cross-community initiatives that demonstrate Christian denominations working together. Notable examples include the "4 Corners Festival," the "DOCK Café," Unity pilgrims (Clonard Peace and Reconciliation ministry), Embrace NI and events related to the "Week of Prayer for Christian Unity."

In March 2024 Rev. Callan Slipper based in the Focolare in London and Chair of Society for Ecumenical Studies and Trustee of Churches Together in England (former National Ecumenical )Officer for the Church of England), visited Northern Ireland. He has been instrumental in formulating the "Armagh Agreement"-a historic moment facilitating deeper unity between the Moravian Church and the Anglican communion. His visit provided an opportunity to bring together over 20 Church leaders from different denominations in the Focolare for conversation and lunch and Callan shared insights from his experience and his book on receptive ecumenism "Enriched by the Other".

### **Participation in Inter-Church and Synodal Processes**

Focolare NI participates in national Inter-Church Meetings and has been invited to the General Assemblies of the main Christian Churches in Ireland. This year members took part in the 33<sup>rd</sup> Inter-Church meeting "Our Reconciling Vision of Hope: 50 years since the Ballymascanlon Talks". The Trust is engaged in the ongoing synodal process of the Catholic Church nationally and internationally. NI church leaders take part in international conferences organised by the Focolare, such as, the Bishops'

## **THE FOCOLARE TRUST NI**

meeting in Portugal in August 2023 and the 40<sup>th</sup> Conference of Bishops of various Churches in Augsburg at the beginning of March 2024.

### **Focolare EcoPlan**

Members continue to support the Focolare EcoPlan, promoting actions for the protection of people and the planet. They are committed as Laudato Si animators, participating in national and European activities. They took part in the “Green Care Webinar” in October 2023, organized at European level on the topic of “Eco Challenges”.

A climate justice programme began in September 2023 during Season of Creation and led to the establishment of an informal network of multi-faith organizations which has become known as “Join the Dots Together”. From 14 organizations it has grown to nearly 100.

A Conference was held on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2024 with keynote speaker, Lorna Gold of FaithInvest. Join the Dots Together network has set up a website and online calendar to facilitate sharing of information and events about environmental protection and conservation. Collaboration with organizations such as Belfast City Council, NICVA and the Community Relations Council is underway and several events are being organized around International Day of Peace (21<sup>st</sup> September 2024).

### **International**

Focolare members continue to be active in the #daretocare campaign, which promotes care for the vulnerable and the planet. The project is linked to a social media platform at [United World Project](#).

The Trust facilitates participation at the international level by organizing and accompanying groups to conferences and events focused on developing skills for dialogue, exploring projects for the common good, and supporting fundraising activities. Examples include the Living Peace Project, the United World Project, the FormaT formation programme, and the Together4Europe project.

In June 2023 members took part in a summer gathering in Iceland to support the small Focolare community there. In August 2023 members took part in the World Youth Day in Lisbon, Portugal.

This year members of Focolare took part in the DialogUE project which held webinars at European level on various aspects of inclusion: 1<sup>st</sup> March on the Social Inclusion of the Roma people and 22<sup>nd</sup> March on the Social Inclusion of people with Disabilities. Tony O’Reilly from Derry/Londonderry, a member of Focolare involved in the North West Forum of People with Disabilities, gave one of the keynote inputs.

Focolare Northern Ireland has established “Dialogue for Africa,” a group that fosters relationships between members from Ireland and Africa. Meeting periodically via Zoom, this mutual engagement is enriching for all participants. The group also raises funds to support projects in Africa, such as the “Kindergarten” in Bobo Dioulasso (Burkina-Faso).

### **Collaboration with other Charities**

Members of Focolare Northern Ireland support other registered charities like “Embrace NI”, Corrymeela, the Inter-Faith Forum and Youth Link NI, fostering a more welcoming society, especially for migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees.

# THE FOCOLARE TRUST NI

## Financial Review

The Trustees have a procedure now in place to review the accounts and to formally draft a Reserves Policy appropriate to the needs and aims of the Trust going forward. The charity's accounts will be prepared each year to 31 March. These accounts cover the year to 31 March 2024 and show a surplus of £2,179

## Risk Management

The Trustees are aware of the risks to which the charity may be exposed. A formal risk assessment process and strategies for dealing with identified risk areas is being formalised.

SIGNED: Emmanuel McGowan DATE: 4/12/2024  
Trustee

SIGNED: J.M. DATE: 4/12/24  
Trustee

## THE FOCOLARE TRUST NI

### INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE FOCOLARE TRUST NI

We report to the charity trustees on our examination of the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024 which are set out on pages 8 to 11.

#### **Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner**

As the charity trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.

It is our responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 65 of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008;
- follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland under section 65(9)(b) of the Charities Act; and
- state whether particular matters have come to our attention.

#### **Basis of independent examiner's report**

We have examined your charity accounts as required under section 65 of the Charities Act and our examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland under section 65(9)(b) of the Charities Act.

Our examination included a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as charity trustees concerning any such matters.

Our role is to state whether any material matters have come to our attention giving us cause to believe:

1. That accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 63 of the Charities Act
2. That the accounts do not accord with those accounting records
3. That the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act
4. That there is further information needed for a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

#### **Independent examiner's statement**

We have completed our examination and have no concerns in respect of the matters (1) to (4) listed above and, in connection with following the Directions of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, we have found no matters that require drawing to your attention.

*McDonald O'Neill & Co*  
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**McDonald O'Neill & Co.**  
**Chartered Accountants**  
**5 Union Buildings, Union Place**  
**Dungannon, Co. Tyrone**

Date: 4.12.24.....

**THE FOCOLARE TRUST NI**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

Notes	<b>12 Months ended 31 March 2024 General Funds</b>	<b>12 Months ended 31 March 2023 General Funds</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>		
Donations under Perpetual Gift Aid	75,879	65,236
Gift Aid Tax Refund received	11,861	13,434
General donations	10,120	35,412
State Benefits contributed	9,119	8,084
Contributions towards Ecumenical Meeting of Bishops	-	-
Refunds and contributions toward costs	2,012	1,880
<b>TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES</b>	<b>108,991</b>	<b>124,046</b>
<b>RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>		
Contributions to central fund for development of Focolare communities in developing countries	33,590	57,529
Ecumenical Meeting of Bishops	-	-
Donations & Gifts	3,997	1,271
Rent for Community Residence	19,975	15,408
Provisions and household expenses	12,883	11,382
Clothing & Personal Care	3,738	2,594
Education, training, and spiritual renewal	6,362	7,533
Light, heat & utilities	3,587	3,546
Printing, postage, stationery & telephone	4,726	2,137
Motor & travel	14,583	11,951
Bank charges	223	189
Accountancy	1,320	1,194
Depreciation – motor vehicles	1,023	1,279
Depreciation – Fixtures etc.	508	414
General Expenses	321	2,386
Profit/Losses on disposals	-	-
<b>TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>	<b>106,836</b>	<b>118,813</b>
<b>NET INCOMING/(OUTGOING) RESOURCES</b>	<b>2,155</b>	<b>5,233</b>
<b>RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS</b>		
Funds brought forward	59,000	53,767
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>	<b>61,155</b>	<b>59,000</b>

THE FOCOLARE TRUST NI

BALANCE SHEET – 31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	2024		2023	
		£	£	£	£
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>	<b>2</b>				
Fixtures, fittings and equipment		2,875		2,346	
Motor vehicles		4,094		5,117	
		<u>        </u>	6,969	<u>        </u>	7,463
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>					
Prepayments		3,462		2,798	
Other debtor		-		-	
Bank account		54,339		52,024	
Cash account		9		610	
		<u>57,810</u>		<u>55,432</u>	
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>					
Accruals & Creditors		(874)		(1,145)	
		<u>        </u>		<u>        </u>	
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>			56,936		54,287
<b>DEFERRED INCOME</b>					
Church Donation – World Meeting of Families			(2,750)		(2,750)
<b>NET ASSETS</b>			<u>61,155</u>		<u>59,000</u>
<b>FUNDS</b>					
General funds	<b>3</b>		61,155		59,000
Capital funds	<b>4</b>		0		0
<b>Total funds</b>			<u>61,155</u>		<u>59,000</u>

We approve the financial information which comprises the statement of financial activities and the balance sheet. We acknowledge our responsibility for the financial information and for providing McDonald O'Neill & Co. with all information and explanations necessary for its compilation.

SIGNED: Conor Mc Givern DATE: 4/12/2024  
Trustee

SIGNED: J. Man DATE: 4/12/24  
Trustee

## THE FOCOLARE TRUST NI

### NOTES TO THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

#### 1. DONATIONS

A portion of the Trust's income relates to donations made under perpetual Gift Aid by three of the Trustees. These Trustees live in community and donate their entire salaries to the Focolare Trust NI.

#### 2. FIXED ASSETS

	Fixtures, Fitting & Equipment	Motor Vehicles	Total
Cost	£	£	£
At 1 April 2023	8,144	21,755	29,899
Additions	1,037	0	1,037
Disposals	0	0	0
At 31 March 2024	9,181	21,755	30,936
<b>Depreciation</b>			
At 1 April 2023	5,798	16,638	22,436
Charge for the year	508	1,023	1,531
Eliminated on disposal	0	0	0
At 31 March 2024	6,306	17,661	23,967
<b>Net Book Value</b>			
At 31 March 2024	2,875	4,094	6,969

#### 3. GENERAL FUNDS

	2024	2023
	£	£
Brought Forward	59,000	53,767
Net Incoming/(Outgoing) Resources	2,155	5,233
Transfer from Capital Fund	0	0
At 31 March 2024	61,155	59,000

## THE FOCOLARE TRUST NI

### 4. CAPITAL FUNDS

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Brought Forward	0	0
Transferred to General Funds	0	0
At 31 March 2024	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>