

**INTERCHURCH FAMILIES: ISSUES AND REFLECTIONS (IFIR)** is an email newsletter compiled once or twice each year. You can subscribe to it free by sending an email to [ray.temmerman@shaw.ca](mailto:ray.temmerman@shaw.ca). In the email, ask to be added to the IFIR list. Ray Temmerman is responsible for the international Interchurch Families website. You can find the latest version of the IFIR, and older ones, at [www.interchurchfamilies.org/ifir/index.shtml](http://www.interchurchfamilies.org/ifir/index.shtml).

IFIR is intended for interchurch families (usually where one partner is Roman Catholic and the other a Christian of another communion) and all concerned for their welfare. It continues the work of the Interchurch Families journal (1993-2004). Articles and resources are placed directly on the website and the letter draws attention to the new material. If you cannot access the internet you can request paper copies from Ruth Reardon (Little School House, High Street, Turvey, Bedford MK43 8DB, UK: [aifreardon@talk21.com](mailto:aifreardon@talk21.com))

The first three numbers of this email newsletter were issued under the title Interchurch Families: Issues-Reflections-News. From this number 'News' has been dropped from the title. The Interchurch Families journal gave a periodic round-up of news of the various interchurch family groups and associations that exist around the world. This work has now been taken over by Melanie Finch, who is Secretary of the Interchurch Families International Network (IFIN) that was established in the course of a meeting held in Rome in October 2005. IFIN formalises and broadens the loose network of interchurch family associations that was set up following the Rome Gathering in 2003. You can access the news and reports collected together by Melanie by going to: [www.interchurchfamilies.org/intl/index.shtml](http://www.interchurchfamilies.org/intl/index.shtml)

### Canon law, pastoral care, Christian unity

When I worked in the office of the Association of Interchurch Families in London, I used to complain that I found myself reaching for the Code of Canon Law (and the 1993 Directory) more often than for the Scriptures! However, it is important to be as clear as

possible about what canon law says and does not say about interchurch marriages, and to read it in the light of constantly developing ecumenical relationships. We present in IFIR no.4 two texts written out of different contexts that help us to do this. One, *Mixed marriages: Conversations in Theology, Ecumenism, Canon Law and Pastoral Practice*, is a lecture given by the Most Revd John McAreavy, Bishop of Dromore, Ireland. The other, *Mixed Marriages in the Light of Ecumenism*, is an article by Jude Abidemi Asanbe, a priest of the Ondo diocese in Nigeria who is a lecturer in the Catholic Institute of West Africa.

### A story, a reflection and a report

We shall continue to present interchurch families in all their variety. Here we have another story from Bridgefolk, a Catholic-Mennonite group in the USA. (some earlier stories can be found in IRN no.2.) Bridgefolk found interchurch couples glad to join them as a help to working out how to live their marriages on 'the Bridge'. *A Mennonite Catholic Marriage* tells the story of Tom and Pat Crotty.

The next article gives personal *Reflections from an Interchurch Family Perspective* on a significant colloquium on *Catholic Learning: Explorations in Receptive Ecumenism* that took place at Ushaw College, Durham, England, in January 2006..

Finally, we have the recently released short report of the informal *Meeting of representatives of the Interchurch Families International Network (IFIN) with staff of the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity in Rome, 18 October 2005*. George Kilcourse (who liaises with the PCPCU on behalf of IFIN) regrets the delay, but, as a courtesy, he awaited the approval of PCPCU staff members.

### New on the website:

- **Mixed marriages: a view from an Irish bishop**  
[www.interchurchfamilies.org/ifir/2006/ifir04-200604McAreavey.pdf](http://www.interchurchfamilies.org/ifir/2006/ifir04-200604McAreavey.pdf)
- **A perspective from a Nigerian priest**  
[www.interchurchfamilies.org/ifir/2006/ifir04-200604Asanbe.pdf](http://www.interchurchfamilies.org/ifir/2006/ifir04-200604Asanbe.pdf)
- **A Bridgefolk couple's story**  
[www.interchurchfamilies.org/ifir/2006/ifir04-200604Crotty.pdf](http://www.interchurchfamilies.org/ifir/2006/ifir04-200604Crotty.pdf)
- **Reflections following a colloquium**  
[www.interchurchfamilies.org/ifir/2006/ifir04-200604Ushaw.pdf](http://www.interchurchfamilies.org/ifir/2006/ifir04-200604Ushaw.pdf)
- **Report on a visit to Rome, October 2005**  
[www.interchurchfamilies.org/ifir/2006/ifir04-200604Romevisit.pdf](http://www.interchurchfamilies.org/ifir/2006/ifir04-200604Romevisit.pdf)