

That you act justly . . .

[Br John Deeney](#)

Richard was 17 at the time of his interview. He sat himself down side-on to the table, leaned his elbow on it and looked me in the eye. I felt rather as if the Shop Steward had come to make a few things clear to the management. At one stage in the interview for his place on a developing world project he said: "I come from a very Christian family, but myself, I'm virtually an atheist. But I have heard that God is on the side of the poor and the oppressed and I'd like to go on one of these projects and see if that's true." Should he get a place? Well, he did, maybe on the basis that those who are not against you are for you. When I saw him again after the project he said, "That really did wonders for my faith." I hoped that he had grasped the point that God is on the side of the poor and that we are invited to be a part of that ministry to those in need. It is no use just saying 'Lord, Lord,' if we don't follow it up with our actions. And the very fact of being involved in doing something positive brings us closer to God.

For summer 2008 we started with 82 people signed up for one of the 'young people's' projects, the most we have ever had, yet we still had to turn a number of people down. Broken ankles and illness and family concerns have reduced the numbers to below 80 but 7 project groups will be setting out early in July. We had to relocate from Kenya because of the political and ethnic troubles there early in the year but were able to find a second project in neighbouring Uganda. There will also be a 3 week project for older people on which John Caherty will be a representative of the Kintbury team.

The destinations are:

Ghana: working on classrooms for a junior secondary school in the Upper West Region.

Uganda: building a hostel for girls at Kitoba secondary school in the Hoima diocese.

Uganda: building classrooms, office and library at Kigumba secondary school.

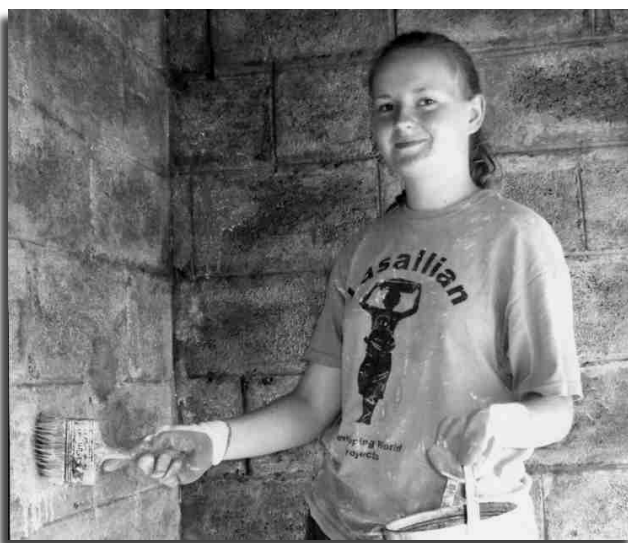
Rwanda: building housing for teachers at a secondary school in Nyanza.

Zambia: our first time in this country and the group will have to live in tents. Working at a parish complex (church, school, orphanage) in Lusaka.

India: a group will be helping out with children and building at RTU.

India: building classrooms at the Brothers secondary school at Suranam.

Ethiopia the older persons' group will be building and helping with teaching at a centre for street children in Addis Ababa.



At the same time as completing the final preparations for this year, the process of selecting volunteers for 2009 is well under way. More females apply than males these days (if anyone knows how to redress the balance we would like to know) but the numbers remain enough for us to cope

with. Why do people aged 17 apply? There are, of course, many mysteries about the course of the life of each one of us, but the applicants often spell out their reasons very eloquently;

"I learned about the Lasallian Projects when I was aged 11 and didn't understand the full importance of the work carried out. However, even at that age I was interested in the idea of helping people in poorer countries. As I reached the later years in school, I heard of people I knew who had joined a project and my interest grew. By that time I had a better understanding of global poverty and I had learnt about less economically developed countries in geography lessons. So when I heard about the projects again in college I began to consider what I could possibly contribute to the projects and for what reasons I would want to participate. ... My main reasons for wanting to join the projects are that I believe everyone can make a difference in some way Therefore I want to contribute my time and skills in order to help those less fortunate." That seems to me like a good starting point for closer involvement with the Lasallian Projects.