



While school closures, social distancing mandates, food service restrictions, and travel restrictions upset our plans for the 2020-2021 school year, God continued to show up imparting his wisdom and creativity, helping us grow our online presence and giving us time to tend to some much-needed projects around the Café.

## CAFÉ & BOOKSHOP

It's not surprising that this was perhaps one of the strangest years in the Café. What has been at times the noisiest café in town was certainly a lot quieter as afterschool, student, and Faith Alive programs were put on pause for the majority of the year. While students were not able to physically come into our Café, we continued to serve takeaway food and drinks, as well as serve boxed lunches and snacks to retreats held in local schools when schools were in session.

Though our time with students was certainly shorter, we continued to cultivate connections for providing encouragement and discipleship through our existing social media channels as well as developing several new channels. All in all, this year has provided us with lots of time to encourage one another, seek the Lord in prayer, and accomplish so many tasks that had long been on our to-do list, but which we always seemed to run out of time to complete.

Our Bookshop continued to operate with a local pick-up or post-only system, keeping our team busy with packaging orders and answering the phone!

## RETREATS

This was an exciting year for our retreat program, albeit not an easy one. This year, our teams spread throughout the country, speaking to students about *Happiness* and *Unlocking Potential*. Despite lockdowns and extended quarantines, we were able to hold 281 retreats in counties around the country,



speaking to a total of 7,305 students and seeing 4,671 of them make a declaration of faith. We were also thrilled to lead retreats at 30 new schools this year, many in Dublin City and a few in Ulster with our new teams in those areas, including one school in Northern Ireland. We also led three Youth Alpha sessions to 143 students throughout the year.

During the times of lockdown when we weren't able to go into schools physically, our team remained extremely busy developing scripts and filming videos for our growing YouTube channel. We also attained our Department of Education Appendix I approval status this year, meaning our curriculum is approved to be counted toward students' wellbeing education standards (a set number of hours of mental, physical, and social wellbeing learning required for graduation). This is huge, as we are the first faith-based retreats provider to be granted this! During the process, we were encouraged by the Department of Education's representative to explore extending our curriculum to provide students with even more of the required hours, and development of this additional programming is now ongoing.

**THANK YOU FOR SHARING YOUR TESTIMONIES :) REALLY  
INSPIRATIONAL AND LOVELY TO HEAR THAT EVEN THOUGH YOU  
MAY FEEL LOST OR ALONE THAT YOU CAN ALWAYS TURN TO GOD.**

- a secondary school retreat student

## MOVING ONLINE

Our Scripture School and Counseling Center programs continued to operate virtually this year, and the technology actually allowed us to expand our reach to those outside Galway City and even around the world in Australia, Germany and the US.

## SCRIPTURE SCHOOL

Our Scripture School held three multi-week classes this year on the topics of the Theology of the Body, the Psalms, and the role of the Holy Spirit in Scripture. A total of 41 students attended these classes and became a place where everyone felt safe to share freely and openly. Our weekly guided prayer group, now called "When the Word Gets Real", was attended by 6-10 people each week who studied people in the Bible also enduring difficulties (much like our pandemic!) and how the Lord spoke to them and moved on their behalf.



## COUNSELING CENTER

Our counselors were such a vital part of our ministry this year as so many people were looking for answers to their questions, pains, and loneliness amidst this incredibly difficult season. This year they saw a total of 54 clients virtually with each counsellor seeing roughly 15-20 people a week. Thomas continues to work toward his supervisor's certification, and we are excited for the opportunity this will provide in connecting with other counsellors in the west of Ireland. Additionally, Mike D., our North Dublin retreat leader, is also currently seeking his counselling certification and putting in his practicum hours with An Tobar Nua.

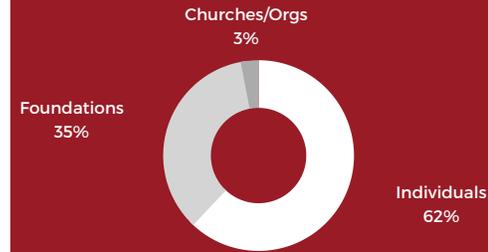
**"I'VE FELT A CHANGE FOR THE FIRST TIME; JUST THIS WEEK I'VE NOTICED THAT I'M BEGINNING TO WANT A FUTURE AGAIN. IN SMALL WAYS I'M STARTING TO LOOK FORWARD TO SOME THINGS."**

## SUMMER CAMPS

Every summer, we host a summer camp and 2020 was no different, though we did move the program online! We filmed two "Reconnect Festivals" that premiered on our YouTube channel, and a Kids' Camp series that kicked off our new An Tobar Nua Kids YouTube channel. Our team developed a variety of games, talks, and fun videos for viewers to tune into and be encouraged by, and we had a lot of fun recording!

## WHO MADE THIS HAPPEN?

None of this work would happen without our incredible donors. Thank you to the amazing individuals, companies, and foundations that made this work possible.



## WAYS TO SUPPORT US

**DONATE**

Support a Volunteer, send us a check, or donate directly on our website at [FoundationInChrist.org](https://FoundationInChrist.org)

**FOLLOW US**

Follow our An Tobar Nua Cafe and Retreat pages on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube

**PRAY**

Your spiritual support strengthens us daily