

Dorone: Before I start recording, I just need you to consent to this recording, do you?

Marie: Yes, ok

D: Great, so, this is just the introduction we will only do today, but let's see how we get on. Just to start, maybe, tell us a bit about yourself, what's your name, your age, a bit about your education.

M: You want me to mention those?

D: Yes, please

M: My name is Marie Grouse and I was born on 14th August 1932 and I lived with my parents in Bray in Co. Wicklow and then we bought Greystones, where we were in Bray until 1939. We moved to Greystones, a nice big house which was rented with my Mum and Dad and aunt and uncle and then we got our own house in Rathdown Road in Greystones but it was all very nice.

D: And how old were you when your parents bought the house?

M: They bought the house when I was about 9 years old.

D: OK, so you were renting up to then.. Why were you renting? I mean..

Was it an economical decision or was it more common to rent at the time?

M: Hmm, it was a case of a bit like it is nowadays, a couple got married and they saved to buy their own home, my grandmother had a house in Bray that she gave us for the first about 7 years and then we were two years in the rented house.

Grandmother had some property in Bray and then we went to the big house for two years and then we bought our bungalow down in Rathdown road. My aunt and uncle moved in beside us, which was great, separate houses but really nice.

D: You were kinda renting in the family then.. Did I understand that correctly?

M: We weren't renting, we were buying this bungalow, after two years we had our own bungalow...

D: Was that a problem common in the community in general that people would be renting and would be buying a bit later on?

M: I don't think I've really thought about it very much about it, to be honest with you.

When we moved down to our house, everyone beside us, they all owned their own houses. I think it was just a case of getting started, pretty similar to what it is today. People rented for a while, and then their own home, pretty similar I'd say.

Mum worked though, Mum was most unusual, because at that time, I don't think women worked after the children were born. Mum had a good job, she did accounts in Jurys Hotel and printed all the menus, so therefore she wanted to stay on, because she had a very good wage.

My Dad took me down to my grandmother on the seafront in Bray every morning on the crossbar on his bike and I'd be there all day with my grandmother and she'd look after me all day and then he came home from work and that went on for 7 years. And we moved to Greystones and my sister was born and she gave up work then, that's the way it went.

D: How about your education Mo, did you have any formal education?

M: O yes, I went to school every day and it was nice, way down by the sea in Greystones, it was quite nice; and I went to secondary school around the corner, teachers were nice, in St David's Holy Faith Secondary School and then my uncle in Bray (Mum had 5 sisters and my aunt, this sister she had bought the post office in Bray) and her husband Tom took ill and died in 1947 and my aunt needed someone to help her in the post office and she had 4 young children, the eldest was only 3 months and eldest was 7, and she had 4 young children to look after and she asked me to help run the Post Office and to be there to sort of be a bit of company for the 4 children as well but I didn't live there, I lived in Greystones.

D: How old were you when you were working in the Post Office?

M: I'm not quite sure what age I was, I suppose I was about... I know I worked there til I was 22, til I got married. Mum's sisters all had shops, one had a newsagent, one had an ice cream shop and the other one had a bakery and a second one had a post office as well so they were busy days, I often helped in any of these as well, occasionally.

It was a tragedy, her husband dying so young, he had a heart complaint and the two boys went off to boarding school just the two girls were there then, they had a lady in, looking after the two girls.

They all had their own homes like, you know, no problem there at all.

D: Was it common in your family to have a lot of private businesses?

M: Yes, my grand-mother was a real entrepreneur, haha.

I could tell you a story about her but it would probably be too long to tell you.

D: No, go ahead, I'd love to hear it.

M: Her husband was a fisherman, he had his own boat on the seafront in Bray and he sold the fish and then, when his father died, his father lived right opposite but when he died, his lovely house called St. John the year of might have been 1900, not quite sure, this lovely house on the Meath Road in Bray, and he sold the house after the grandparents died but when my granddads Father died, he left the house between his two sons, my grandad got 500 pounds in cash and his brother got 500 pounds in cash and grandad brought it home across the road and he put the 500 pounds across the road in a tin box underneath the bed and there it was. He took 5 pounds out to buy some nice new clothes" Next morning, he got up and went to take out another 5 pounds and grandmother had intervened in the meantime. The house two doors up was lovely big house and she borrowed his 500 pounds without asking or telling him!

He said "Marie, Marie, my money has been stolen."

She said "No, no, no I just borrowed it for a while."

"You had no right to borrow it, you should have asked me first."

"No, no, If I'd asked you first, you would have said no."

He said "Yes, I would have said no."

She promised to pay it all back to him and she did so he forgave her and they had this guest house, they turned it into the guest house, there were a good few rooms in it, 12, 13, 14, I don't know and she ran it as a guest house from then on. And Gran, she was a business lady and her daughters all but one, took after her, they got different properties in Bray, like a bakery and an ice cream shop.

D: And all from that 500 pounds she borrowed?

M: I suppose they were educated well enough by the fact she had borrowed that 500 pounds, and he thanked her afterwards but at the time he was cross, very soft, gentle, loving man he was, but he got cross over the 500 pounds.

She had a problem though because she was 50 pounds short for the auctioneer and nobody would lend her the 50 pounds in Bray because he only had a fishing boat and her best friend that she sat beside in school, Anne.. Annie Coughlan and she went to Annie and Annie owned a post office and she went to Annie “of course I’ll lend you the 50 pounds, no problem” and she did, and she paid the auctioneer and paid Annie back and everyone back. All was well. She was a great little lady, a real business lady.

D: Especially for that time, what year would that have been, about the 1930s or was it earlier?

M: That would have been, I suppose about 1925 or 1920.

D: So that’s a lot of money

M: It was a lot then, it’s a beautiful little house, it’s still there, it’s a lovely house, it’s a nice area. The gran was always very particular about herself, she always had it very nice, you know, it wasn’t like it was old and dilapidated or anything like that, no no.

D: Well, that’s an incredible story. A woman was able to move this money around, create all these businesses, she is also doing it just as the Irish Free state is being declared and there is civil war on, so that’s really amazing. Do you know. Cos you were born 10 years after the Irish State was declared. Did you feel as much or did your parents feel much the consequences of the war?

M: Well, I was too young, I was only born in ’32, I really don’t remember feeling much about it at all, I really don’t. I know one uncle went to war in 1940 — Michael, a very nice gentleman, he was away at war for a good few years and there was great rejoicing when he came home, my grandmother’s first son. I do remember things about the war, like things being scarce and everything, like we’d get a very small amount of butter every week and a small amount of sugar, at that time, you paid a pound a pound for a packet of tea, tea was very scarce. I remember all that going on, as well. I also remember that a ship overturned out at sea in Bray and all the tinned foods were washed up on the shore, grandad came up and said would everyone go down and bring up some of the food to the house and we got all these tins, oh, any amount of tins, any amount of margarine and the tins had no labels on them and when you opened the tin, you got a nice surprise, it might be nice pears or it might be peas, it could be anything, you know, a great bit of fun attached to that, the place was thronged with people helping themselves to tins off the beach.

D: And why was it again Mo that the boat just left everything in the water?

M: The boat must have been torpedoed or something out at sea and all this food was washed in ashore, the boat sank, all the tins were washed up on shore, I remembered all that. We had great fun opening up the tins, now this might be good or it might be something really nice. Things were scarce during the war years, there was no doubt about it, I was afraid of the masks, oh the masks were dreadful, they looked terrible, I mean, they were nothing like the masks we have today, they fitted on over your head, kind of frightening, you know.

D: Sorry, what sort of masks?

M: 39–45 war, they were kind of light rubber, we didn’t have them but I saw the older people had them, I don’t remember wearing them in the house at all.

D: That would have been the Second World War, 1945 you said?

M: ’39 it started. 1939.

D: I think you are probably the oldest person we are interviewing. So we haven’t heard any testimonies about how it was in those days.

M: We'd be going to the church and we'd be praying and praying, and praying for all the poor people that were injured, very sad war, I mean, Ireland was not officially... You could feel the grief of all the people who prayed. You'd hear the news on the radio, we didn't have television then at all, at all, plenty of music, plenty of records. Modern technology today is so different, amazing. The family generally were very good for getting you together and playing cards and singing songs and having parties and all that type of thing in their own way, celebration of birthdays and things like that.

D: And you remember that since your early childhood. Sorry Mo, I didn't hear you, what did you say?

M: They were a lot of people that were extremely generous, you know, they really spoiled me so much over the time, I remember going on lovely holidays with my Mom and Dad, when I was young at 3 and 4 or 5. We'd go to Llandudno or different places and I was delighted with having my parents to myself, my sister was not born for 6 or 7 years after I was, that was nice.

D: What is your living standard today, in perspective today, so has it gone up or down, relating to your parents and grandparents?

M: Oh, my living standard today? Well, they used to always say they had enough for their wants and enough to spare, you know and didn't have cars although my uncle got a car I remember alright. He used to bet on the horses and he won 360 pounds on a horse one day. and within 2 days he had a car, I remember the number of it and all, EPO 630, it was all a great novelty, wonderful novelty, amazing.

They didn't have a car generally speaking, the rest of the family had no cars, and that was for a good number of years. I think the standard would be pretty similar really, they always had lots of good food, lots of nice clothes.

See, my Mom was great, she made dresses, her aunt taught her how to do tailoring, she was a tailoress, her aunt was, and taught Mum how to make suits, Mum was great she would knit beautifully and sew beautifully and make lovely jackets, and my father used to have good suits, and then they'd go to the dry cleaners and when they'd come home, I'd be asked to collect them on Thursday night coming home and I'd be asked the following week to rip all the suit into pieces and she would put in on the dining room table, and I had 2 brothers and she'd cut out a suit for my brothers out of the old suit, turned it inside out or whatever and cut a new suit, perfect she was, lovely, veneers were done beautifully and everything.

She was able to do it properly, you know, very thrifty lady, make a hundred pounds profit every year. Loved the work in the kitchen, making pies and lovely dinners, they were great cooks, course Gran was a great cook too, she was cooking for the people that were staying in the hotel, she might have say, 12 men for bed and breakfast, they'd be working up in the forest 2 miles away, or they might be working at different things in Bray.

It went very well for her, ended up buying several houses to rent out and she was ever so generous when 2 of the people were leaving a house and when she was selling the house years and years later she'd reduce, reduce, reduce the price of the house, said they'd been such good tenants all the years and they could have it very cheap.

Generous lady, a charming lady. She always insisted on you helping, you know, I think I was peeling the carrots when I was 4. And podding the peas and all these things and taking the tops and tails off the gooseberries. She demanded a bit of help, you would not have had much choice, now, now, you must help, you must help, you must learn.

I see my great grandchildren now they are not being taught to do all these things like we were. My children were taught how to do these things too but not with the great grandchildren or the grandchildren very much.

D: And why do you think there is a difference then? Is it just that there is more help now?

M: Everything comes easy to you when you are able to do it, but in those days, there was no takeaways, although we always had fish and chips, fish and chips were always popular positively, we didn't have any takeaways as such, we didn't eat out very much, I don't think we ever ate out actually.

D: Was it because there were no options to eat out as much or was it an economical reason?

M: Pardon?

D: Was it because there were no options to eat out as much or was it an economical reason?

M: Yes, My aunt had a very good friend and herself and the husband, were charming and delightful, and they had no children and they used to take me to lots of different hotels and places, I mean, now that I think of it, I'd forgotten all about that, Tom and his wife used to take me out places. They did have places like Avoca, Avoca was up in Kilmacanogue for years and years and years, lovely shop and we'd go up there and we'd have a walk and we'd go in, it wouldn't be a meal, it was mostly ice creams, afternoon tea and coffee and cakes, that type of thing, you wouldn't go in there for meals very much, you always ate at home.

It was a happy life. Mom and Dad were so happy in themselves and they were soft and gentle and kind and all the things you'd like them to be. So we had a lovely life growing up, we really had..plenty of laughter and song, plenty of singing. My grand dad from Duleek in Co. Meath used to come to visit us and he had an accordion. He cycled from Duleek to Greystones, a long way, had the accordion on the bike, would stay two days, he had his son with him, dad's brother, and then they would cycle back home again, that was a long cycle, plenty of singing 'til 4 in the morning, type of thing, we will sing for another little while, make the most of the two days. We had a big house, you see, there was plenty of room for him, the rented house for two years. They used to come quite a lot. They'd have their own room and everything, grand.

D: You mentioned that there was a scarcity of foods, that there was not that much, that everything was expensive, that cheese was a pound, and that's why I was just wondering did that affect the restaurants and the fish and chip places?

M: There were always plenty of restaurants down the seafront. I don't think the locals frequented them very much.

M: Very exciting, my first dinner dance, the people at the door wouldn't let me in, because my dress wasn't suitable, I wasn't properly dressed. I said 'what's wrong?'. He said, "Well, your dress is 4 1/2 inches too short, you'll have to go home and get a different dress". My uncle knew the superintendent of the guards and he went over to him, he said "we have a problem".

"The next time Marie comes she will have a nice long dress but tonight I insist she comes through". That was sorted out nicely, it was a little bit embarrassing.

D: That must have been very exciting, then, so, were there a lot of quite like, upper middle class people in that dinner dance or would it be..

M: They were the cream of the society in Bray, he played bridge and he played cards and he was Member of the Suburban Club, I don't know a lot about the Suburban Club, I think it was a club just for gentlemen, they were all very well spoken, very nice indeed, indeed.

D: What is the main difficulty that you encounter today, like in this day and time, like for instance some people say that the main difficulty they encounter is in housing, or some people say it has to do with work, some say they don't have any, you know, people have kinda different views on what is difficult for them these days, so I'm wondering for you as someone who has seen Ireland develop in so many ways, what is your main difficulty today, if there is any?

M: I don't have any main difficulties except a certain amount of difficulties, you are not as agile perhaps as you were before and that type of thing but as for society today, I think the main difficulty positively is, that they're earning so much money compared to years ago and it's still not sufficient to buy a house easily, it was never easy to buy a house, I think, your first home but still, the odds are stacked against them now unless they are very well educated but even years ago when Mom was studying to do her accountancy, she had to go a long way into Dublin from Bray every day on the train to study. When she got married they hadn't enough money to buy a house either. They were in granny's house for 6 to 7 years, so I'd say it was difficult enough even then. But nowadays, the odds are stacked against them by the time they are educated and get a good job and save for their home and want to have a car to pay for. It seems to be getting harder for young people, I think, It would be nice if there were more houses for them, if they could buy their first home easily, but the actual jobs are very plentiful I think plenty of work well. It has been up to this.

This Coronavirus is so serious, so difficult, God knows what it will be like at this stage.

I don't remember a lot of illness years ago, although there was T.B. I remember T.B. was serious, very serious, my grand aunt had 4 daughters and one of them got T.B. and went to the sanatorium in Newcastle, Co Wicklow. No dishwashers at all. Gran had one lady, she used to come to clean the house.

She lived a good way away, and she came down one morning, it was raining very heavy, and there were steps up to the hall door. I remember the door was open.

And she said

"Will you tell Mrs Mc Carthy please, I can't come to work today, I'm just too wet, I'll be in tomorrow" and turned her heel and went off home.

She got so wet coming to the job she decided not to come in. What sort of a lady is that at all, at all, you know. They went after her. She wouldn't consider coming in at all, I think she was going to be working out the back and we couldn't afford it, we just couldn't afford this extra expense. She said "Oh I'm sorry about that, I really am". When the curtains were made, they were lovely and they lasted for years and it was grand but at the time, it didn't suit Dad financially, they were after putting on an extension out the back and the money, I think was a little bit tight. That was the only argument I ever remember between them, it left a bit of an atmosphere, aw, they were grand the following day.

It wasn't a house for shouting and arguing, a very peaceful house, I'm glad to say.

D: And this is the type of peaceful house you also built yourself with Cecil then later on?

M: Yeah, well I used to call him very hasty, he wouldn't be wanting to hit anybody or anything like that, but he'd say...

"That won't do at all" It was altogether different. He had to fight his own corner I think growing up. And he'd say then:

"What have you got to say?"

"It's ok."

"You are hopeless, I can't even have an argument with you, you're just hopeless".

Marie laughs.

“No, No, I don’t argue” We have to talk about it

“I’m not going to argue about it, nothing was that important that I would argue too much about it and if it was really serious, he might get his own way. Anything for peace, peace was very important, no doubt about it. He didn’t really approve of everything that happened, you would have your own opinion, but he could be argumentative about it, peace was very, very important, I think the children grow up very peaceful if they grow up in a peaceful house, don’t they? It wouldn’t make them strong in business, I don’t know but I don’t think anything is worth getting too cross about..

If they did not take their turn with the dishes, we had a duty roster in the kitchen and then one would change, Roisin would be going to play camogie, say well I can’t do the dishes tonight and somebody else would say I can’t. There were 8 for dinner every night, there were a lot of dishes.

If I do Wednesday and you do Friday and I did last Thursday and all this

“Hold on, girls, out shoo, out you go into the sitting room please, I’ll close the door, bye bye I’ll do the dishes myself”

“It’s OK, I’ll do them” Everyone wanted to do them then, not worth it, that’s how it is in my opinion

I think sometimes you are played on a little bit when you are like that, but it’s worth it. You go to bed and you are peaceful at night, not worrying, that’s what I think.

And the church of course, Fr Patrick Peyton was an uncle of Cecil’s and he ended up he had rosary crusades here in Ireland and lots and lots of people prayed the rosary together then he went to America, this is about 1951, 52 and he had rosary crusades all over America, hundreds and hundreds of people and he prayed in every state, well not every state but a lot of states in America and he died over there at about ’85 or ’83 or something like that, about 1956 or 1958.

But that’s the way it should be, if you pray for peace, it should come to you.

D: You are in a place where there’s no war, do you think there’s peace here?

M: In Ireland today?

D: Yes.

M: Well it’s very peaceful where I live that’s for sure. Very quiet and very peaceful, nice neighbours and a few friends around. We are so fortunate that finally in Northern Ireland, there’s comings and goings in the North and the South it’s very... So we must be grateful for what we have, that’s how I see it at the moment.

D: And did you ever feel the conflict?

M: the Northern Ireland conflict?

D: Yes.

M: It never affected me directly, to be truthful. No, I didn’t have relations or friends up there and it was still very sad to read the reports of it, before the peace initiative. And I think it was praise due to the people organising the peace treaty it was just terrific when it did come. And it’s nice to know there’s still peace with them at the moment. I’m sure you’ll find a few people who won’t agree but, there will always be people like that, wont there?

D: Yeah.

M: We have to thank the Lord for the peace that we do have. Positively.

D: What do you think is the sound of war? And then what is the sound of peace?

M: Sound of war, no friction behind between the North or the South or whatever there might be obviously is the sound of peace. And quite a bit of reaction of people in the South here living that did come from the North. I spoke to a lady one day in Wexford when we were down there on holidays, and she said that during the Trouble times, all family members and people got together and moved to Wexford. The whole family. And then they had a peaceful life in Wexford, When all the troubles going on and all the violence going up there, so if they didn't take it to their own hands and move, but not everybody could do that and they financially not be able to do that so they have very sad times up there's no doubt about it. It makes a very sad region. And we hope that peace will last of course and we pray everyday that peace will last and there's a lot of other countries that don't have peace unfortunately as you well know. So that's the only thing I could say about peace because it's beyond you and I really i'd say, except for prayer.

D: And do you think the peace with the North is a temporary thing?

M: No, I don't really, I think there's a lot of good will up there, there seems to be a lot of good will. I'm sure it's not perfect you know but there seems to be a great amount of people with good will. Sometimes, I watch priests giving mass on television from different counties of the North and they are very charismatic. they are, and they must be doing a lot of good. There was a service on this morning now, Presbyterians and they were praying for peace in their land and great devotion to the Lord and all that type of thing you know, talking about the past and great hopes for the future you know, so if I continue this it's very different to its not as joyful as some of the services, I didn't find it very joyful to be honest. But sincere and correct and prayerful.

D: Is peace a relation with oneself? Or is it between people or states?

M: Well so and so. Well peace starts within yourself when you're tiny and you're brought to be good and kind and loving and gentle and all those things. It starts with you. But of course you go through life, it's nice to keep being good and kind to people you meet, and then peace in your home is very important of course it is. I was brought with that.. I always had peace in my grandmother's and laughter.

And Peace in my own house and my father when he got older he, I got talking to him and he said 'you know what it is Marie? You are giving people good advice and all the years I gave you good advice. He thought it was sort of funny in a way. strange or amazing but I suppose it's up to everybody to show love and try to keep peace between their friends and neighbours.

I had great friends, I had friends, I had friends that I met at 16 and now at our 80, 4 of them have died, we had this friendship all our lives. We'd use to meet at Thursday nights at different houses and like we weren't near one another, one of them lived in Bray which is about 15 miles from here and Enniskerry another 15 miles from here so it wasn't a case of just going down the road to meet my friends, I had to travel to see them.

And we'd have great talking and laughter and discussion about different things and politics, we didn't talk about religion too much. They were all religious anyhow and they mention the Lord now and then but they wouldn't talk about peace very much.

They were trying their best to keep peace in their own families. But we saw a lot of changes during the years, we saw the children how well, how obedient they were and that

when they were younger, when my children were younger and then the teenagers of maybe 10 or 15 years ago they got wanted and they demanded their own way. It seemed to get harder to keep the children, the teenagers peaceful. If they didn't get their own way, they were obviously very upset and showed it. Maybe I'm just looking back with rose coloured spectacles I don't know, but what I thought, it was nicer when people hadn't got quite so much money.

You see, the working, the working wives for me made all the difference. It's a pity it had to happen this way, women like to be independent and have their own money and all that type of thing and you know go on different queries and that type of thing but it was very nice to come from school during the day I thought and mom and dad, mom was there. Dad wasn't there until later. Nice to have mom there knitting or sewing or baking or cooking or whatever and you would chat coming from school immediately and she would hear all the chat and know what's going on whereas if, I suppose now when the children come today home they let themselves in and make their own lunches and they are doing their homework and mom just come in at 5 or 6pm and it's sort of forgotten a little bit of what went on at school and not have a conversation about school and how it was with the teachers or whatever, the curriculum you had, each to their own but I thought for a while it might have upset things.

They are probably settled very well now but what appeared then was what you could, but I think peace is with yourself and then you give a little in your community, do what you can to keep the peace too. You know people are critical of different things maybe in the area, and when I was in the residents association I used to hear about these things and the residents association would try to sort things for people and it worked, and the politicians would be coming for meetings and listen to what we needed, to the different things we needed you know. And they might be trivial things like coming along and cleaning the shores or whatever you know they are all talking to how you want the shores to work or trivial things that need sorting out just the same.

D: And you mentioned earlier that you think that religion has you know quite a significant influence on peace or peacefulness, so I'd like to direct that question then to you, do you think that the Church has a hand in creating peace between the people, peace between oneself, or peace between States?

M: Well I think it's very difficult the situation we are in now because you know the way sometimes the men years ago would go to school young men and then the parents, I don't know maybe in the like the 40s or so they kinda said they'd like to have a priest in their family. So that young man would not have any ideas of family,.....were more broad minded than other people like.

D: Can you repeat that, Mo, sorry, I didn't hear you, you got cut off.

M: I said I think sometimes young men when they did their leaving certificate, especially the country parents would put pressure on them to become priests. They'd like to have a priest in the family, but they'll have big families and they'd like one of them to be a priest, but when that boy went into priesthood, I always felt some of them were not very broad-minded. They didn't know the work it entailed to be a mother and to be a father and to have children and I remember one night for instance like, this priest called, they used to call occasionally to say hello to us in the house, and I was dressed up to go to a dance and Cecil was dressed up and as we were going out the front door to go out he knocked and we didn't ask him in and he said 'what's happening here?' and I said 'we're going to a dance' and he said '...such nonsense! a

couple dancing and leaving the children, such nonsense! You don't need to be dancing, you need to be sitting in there and looking after your children' I said 'oh no no, hold on, you don't need to be so critical of all ' and he said 'I will be critical because I'm right!' and I said 'well you are entitled to your opinions but we're going dancing! We have to have a break from the ordinary routine of life as well and it's fun to dance and it's nice to dance and uplift and all this'. But he wouldn't agree at all, he went straight from school and he was an ordinary child and he was very brainy and very clever and the church recommended him to priesthood because he was very learned altogether but you know the way the men weren't perfect either. We had a bishop one time and he was very eccentric. And he didn't treat people, I think I sent him letters on two or three occasions but he didn't listen to them, you never got a reply.

The rules were there and they had to be obeyed, that was the attitude. Then there were some very loving, very kind priests as well, that father Patrick Peyton he was amazingly careful he was and the work he did in the world, in Ireland here and in America.

They were all very different. There is one priest I know for the last 50 years, he's been really so nice, he'd be like your brother sort of a thing you know, there's a mixture in the religion and in the priests as well, some will be very good and kind I find. Not just in our church but Cecil was Church of Ireland (Protestants) and the reverend in the Church of Ireland was beautiful, kind and would laugh and joke. And Cecil's funeral, he was amazing. He was very amazing. He came here one night after Cecil passed away and said would you like one of your children to speak at the funeral service in the church where he'll be buried? And I said 'yea that will be grand' and he had his book open and then he said and what are your grandchildren's names? 'My grandchildren?' and he said yeah so I started naming them all off and he said 'hold on, hold on, how many children are you hoping to share? And I said I have 17 and he said oh my goodness you couldn't have 17 grandchildren. Oh my goodness, the service will go too long ' and then later I was in with another reverend and she said 'that would be lovely' so she went ahead and she allowed everybody to go up and tell a little story about granddad and like that was so amazing to me. That she'd find the time and she'd manage to do that. You know there are some wonderful people out there. Really is and they keep the faith going and the prayers going. And I think that's wonderful. But you have any kind of person in the shops or stores everywhere, different kinds of personalities and so be it. The majority are great and they get off an odd one here or there and they can be quite critical you know, but yes they are good.

D: And did you ever find your church, the Catholic Church or the Protestant Church, Church of Ireland, criticising your marriage to Cecil? Or was it always seen upon something nice and peaceful?

M: Well, my mother had 5 sisters and they were very criticisms came, when I decided I gave it a lot of thought, I knew that they will /it will be looked upon in 1952/3 with my aunts 'oh we don't want Marie to marry someone from the Church of Ireland' and it would be much easier if you find someone from your church. That was their attitude. So I got very upset because I wanted to do my own thing and Cecil would not become a Catholic but he said that he would after his mother died. But while his mother was alive, he couldn't possibly do that. So I said, I went up to the Church in Blacklion in Greystones and I prayed about it. And I definitely got a message from the Lord and the Lord said to me, "Marry Cecil and you will have many blessings" and I thought that was wonderful, and I decided to get married despite the opposition from my mother. And my dear mother said "Surely, surely out of all the people that we

know, surely you could find someone different' and I said 'Well I made a decision now so' and Cecil decided as a thank you he would live halfway between Greystones and here. You see, I wanted to live in Greystones or Bray but Cecil said we'll live half way from here to Greystones so we picked on Dundrum which is about half way and that he would consider becoming a Catholic when his mum died. That was the agreement we had. And the church did not, the Bishop that was there at the time, did not approve of mixed marriages at all, positively not.

So eventually, we got married outside my parish because the bishop said I had to be married outside the parish and that did not please me, not at all, so that was it really, we went ahead and got married and as the Lord said that time I did get married and we did have many blessings and we were happy all the years. We didn't have any major major arguments or anything like that. The Lord was with us all the way, he prayed every evening and every morning and every time that he could.

He was good and straight and honest in his dealings with everybody and kind so he was a good man. When I met him when he was going to service in the Church on Sunday mornings and he was singing, he had a beautiful voice, and he was singing hymns in St. Anne's church in Dawson street in the afternoon at 2 and then he'd be back in church at 6 o'clock for the evening prayers. So he did practice his religion, you know that way and he went down to this church in Grace Park Road all excited to service on Sundays, not all Sundays but usually he went on Sunday morning. We went away to Portmarnock for Christmas, we used to come back into the service in the morning and come back again to Portmarnock. We used to stay in the hotel. He was a good man, he did a lot of good deeds, he was very generous of heart and kind and all that. I had a letter from a friend before Christmas and he said that Cecil was always great fun and nicely dressed and very loving and he was surprised as he didn't know he had died. So that was a bit unexpected. I sent him a picture of Cecil's dad and all the people that I'd like for him to have. So we don't have any reason to complain about that really.

But my aunts learned to like him. And my mum did too, they got over it. They have good Christian faith so then they did accept him for what it meant, they did, they accepted him into the family. We broke up, we split up for a year and a half when we got the opposition from the congregation, and a year and a half was up at February I think, and that Christmas, we always went to my grandmother's for Christmas, at Christmas day at 2 o'clock there was a knock at the door and I went to the other and there Cecil was. I couldn't wait for him, I couldn't wait for the time we met again, and he had a long and tied out to that he had all little presents about a dozen present and he went in and gave everybody at the table a present. And my granny, my grandmother thought it was such a nice thing to do, so we did try to be separated for a year and a half, nearly a year and a half, a year and four months, but it wasn't to be. I had my Dad's approval anyway. Dad said I may never meet anybody as nice, if you really want to go and get married I'll give you my blessing. My mother came around in time. And my aunty Lily and Cecil were great friends. Wonderful, really, really nice. And we did have her as often as she could come out. We did. We had the lord by our side.

D: In the current political situation what you consider as the main split and polarization in regards to power? Does this have a threatening or motivating effect on peace?

M: Well, this is a very difficult one to summarize.

D: Yes, it is very difficult, I know. All these questions were, people came up with them from different countries across Europe so they are a bit general. They might, that's why they're a bit

difficult I think. But I can give you examples, different people said different things about this. Some people said that the main split and polarization was actually seen in the last election when Sinn Fein was voted in. which was, we haven't seen that in 100 years.

M: That did happen indeed, but then Mary Lou McDonald promised such a lot of things for a lot of different people. And these promises couldn't be realised because there wouldn't be enough prosperity to do it all. I mean she promised to bring in the pension, so then in 3 years earlier than intended., then we have at the moment. But that money is not there you know the political people have to cope with the amount of cash they have to deal with. I know this corona virus is going to make such a difference on the finance but even prior to that there wasn't spare money for the pension to come earlier. You see people are living so much longer now, they are making the payment last for longer. I remember when I was young the age of people who were dying was 60 or 65, you know and now people are living to be 80 or 90 and a 100 sort of thing so a lot more pension needs to be paid out than yesteryear and there were other things she had promised as well and it's easy enough I suppose to approach crowd or whatever and say I'll give you this and I'll give you that and I'll give you the open light, it is wonderful that peace came to the North of Ireland and it is wonderful that the terrible trouble there has all been finished but I don't know about Mary Lou McDonald really and truly. I'd say she's a good woman but then she's so definite in her views and the fella she is change her views somewhat too but when she realises what she has there to do it's all easy to make promises but it's another thing handling cash and delivering. I wish her good luck but I don't know if that's going to work or not but she spoke very nicely the other night, much better than she has been. Most unfortunately she got the virus, she's better thank god, she was on television the other night and she wasn't quite so aggressive. Maybe she will blend well with the other parties. It is a pity that one party couldn't just take over on their own, but everybody's view is just so different. So they'll just have to compromise and work out I guess they just have another election. You can't see another election being that much different to that one so there wouldn't be much point in spending all that money and having an election I would think so, I really do, you know and we are all depending on one another too when it comes to politics we import a lot of things we export a lot of things, it has to be a lot of give and take. It's hard to get peace politically as well I would say. It's nice for anyone who has an opportunity or doubts behind him to go but when you have people like, the people who are going to be in power now, they pull people in that grouping of course, it's hard to know how it will go. Leo Varadkar I think is amazing, I think he's a wonderful man I really do. I think he spoke so well about the virus and everything else. and the minister of health spoke, they are all good people but to get everything working properly is a problem of course. I wish them all good luck and I pray for them everyday that's all I can do. And that's what brings peace Ireland — or not bring the peace but keep the peace — keep the peace we have is what we want to do isn't it?

D: Yes absolutely. I think a lot of the reason why people voted for Sinn Fein so much in this election is because we have a housing crisis. We spoke about that a bit today and a bit yesterday, people don't have enough money to buy houses, there's more homeless people on the streets and then Mary Lou McDonald promised that she is going to help that.

M: That's the right, yeah. My brother Eamon... For people who are too well off, that's what I said to you yesterday like the main thing here is the young couples working both and coming at 4 or 5 (pm) home. I know one doctor who has qualified for 25 years and when he finished his studies and he went to work and he earned very good money, he had to go to the bank

every week and pay some money rather than paying the money (debt for going to medicine school) for the mortgage for a house every week. That's there to tell how much pay back is worth. So as long that people who graduate aren't able to buy a house either because this big thing like mortgage payback and I suppose the auctioneer took about little, they are making most of this situation, you know this business like there was a house up for sale yesterday in Ranelagh the day before and this house in Ranelagh 17 people wanted to buy it and they lowered it down then to 7 people bidding against one another, and then the 7 people were bidding against one another and they wanted 173 thousand for it I think, wait a minute let me think 773 thousand when originally it was 716k so it went up and up and then and then they had to go back down again. So the house sold anyway and the final figure 770 thousand, like that is a lot of money for a normal terraced house. It's a sad amount of money. Of course it sold for so much because of the area, Ranelagh, such a good area and everything. And then if you go to Castleknock you'll pay a million for it, so there are people with money out there you know. Good education, good jobs but they are the minority. For all the rest of people this is a terrible situation really, it's a poverty jungle, it must be terrible to be in hotels and things like that and having no place to stay and one thing I noticed about it all too is that you don't hear much about the dads at all. This lady is in the place and she has 3 children now and somebody else has 2 children, but you don't hear them saying how the dad's are doing themselves. There are lots of dads there leaving children behind and an awful lot of them seem to be missing when it comes to all this. And I think that's very hard, I think that's so sad. I really do. I mean the children want their dad. they want a mum and dad. And Anybody that I know that is not what I would call a well adjusted adult, if you look into the background sometimes the dad died when they were little, you know the children miss their dad growing up they really really do. so I don't know what the answer is but I suppose the price of housing property isn't, the prices keep going up and up and up.

D: Do you think because of this housing crisis, the homelessness, do you think that this has a threatening or motivating effect on peace?

M: I'm sure it does. It's very bitter, I'd say but we can't fix it positively. They made one very big mistake, I saw it happening over the years, they build corporation houses for people who haven't got a lot of money, and they rented the corporation houses to people and Dublin County Council made a big mistake of saying if you want to buy your own house after a certain number of years you can. Of course the people in the corporation houses are better off and they got that offer, they sold the house and moved to a different house. And then instead of, if they were always renting, they'd pass that rent on to somebody else and they'd moved to a better house, but they didn't do that. They sold it, and when they sold those houses in Oxmanstown Road and they were very expensive. They were worth like 15 shillings a week years ago. But people that moved in, they had huge profits on the house, the corporations allowed them to, but there was a mistake made on the way to it. A lot of what had happened was caused by these people making mistakes and not leaving the rented houses affordantly for rent. That's what cause some of that, I don't know about the countryside and if they build those apartments in the country side too, but they built a certain number of houses, but maybe a 100 houses, for the poor people in the area that grand but then they gave them the opportunity of buying them, 'that's great I can make some money and move somewhere else'. And then that house is not available for people who need it. That was a big mistake they made, really and

truly. It's hard to justify that. But they are building new houses now for people who are not so well off, maybe they'll rent those and rent them forever that should make a difference, you know.

D: Yeah, absolutely.

M: And it is hard at the moment, I know it is, there are so many of them. Not just a couple, but so many. Very sad. I can't see a solution for it but them doing their best building more houses but I've never seen so many people coming to live in Ireland, they need housing. That makes a big difference of opinion on things. Even the fruit pickers are coming now, and so many of them are coming in. One lady was on the radio the other day and she wanted to, all her family had immigrated and she wanted to be with her mother now, her mother is very ill and is going to die, and she wouldn't be allowed to come from England. This one person coming from England to hold her mother's hand who's dying and they wouldn't let her through. And yet they can let 200 people come to pick the fruit. It's very hard to get the balance right, that's how I see it.

D: It is, it's kinda dry law, it's just a small thing what they allow and not allow.

M: What do you think about that?

D: I think you're right. You know, they say the law is a dry thing they don't care about the reasoning, especially emotional reasoning doesn't matter. I think a lot of the decisions that are made are economically related, what can benefit and create some sort of profit. That's how I see it. I think it's terrible, it's like you said they wouldn't let that English woman come in and see her Mum.

M: This discussion began from...she was only one person who wanted to walk through the airport and they wouldn't allow her and the fruit you see, they say the fruit will rot, it really would. But these people who own the fruit farms, they are probably millionaires by now, they have had it for years and years and years it always sold well, but it was held on for danger though. This virus you see it was dangerous for them to enter the airport wasn't it really. And where are they going to sleep? They were supposed to be sleeping all the fruit people, the fruit people were going to be put in certain places but a lady rang up on the radio and they said not at all they are going into local houses. You want 2 or 3 people coming in like that and staying in a local house and then they may get the virus. And then if they get the virus, our nurses and doctors will be looking after them and then they're at risk. A lot of risk there isn't there?

D: Yeah, it's really crazy right now.

M: it's very hard. It really is. I'd like everything to be nice for everybody but it's just not like that. This virus is just so bad.

D: Do you practice peace in your own surroundings? And do you see yourself individually, collectively or socially responsible for bringing or maintaining peace?

M: I do practice peace in my own home. I have had people cheated on me and charge me too much and didn't do what they say they'd do. I came across people over the years who weren't straight and honest with me. Mostly people that were doing work for me I think, or promised something and it didn't arrive but I always kept my peace with them. And I don't ever argue with people, because we are always taught not to, my father had 2 sayings: one was if you haven't got something nice to say about a person don't say anything at all. And the other one was if you can't do somebody a good deed, don't you ever get involved in doing something against them. We had grown up like that, being always nice to people, we really were. But I think it's up to yourself to be as good as you can isn't it really.

D: Are there or were there institutions that are responsible for bringing or maintaining peace?

M: Oh, yes, yes. I suppose we must say that the institutions are responsible for all the peace that we've had. So every bit has its own leader and it's own nuance thing but you know, for me it went back to the Bible I suppose really. You know they way that you believe in god, and in his trinity and you believe what you were told in school and at home at the end of the day I guess you know, reading the bible is good. And there are so many things to learn in the Bible, isn't there really. It's amazing so to me I think from all the bible reading Corinthians 13 was about the best. about st Paul went to live in with Corinthians and how isn't it the nature of people now, he met so many different types of people and he was trying to make them believe in god and everything and he was trying to teach them about faith and hope and charity and I suppose in the end of the day, they are 3 most important things. And then, at the end of Corinthians 13, it says there are 3 most important things, faith, hope and love and of those 3 love is the greatest thing. So I think that's what we grew up on, that type of teaching. And if in the world today you prayed more and believed more in these kinds of teaching, it would be a much better place.

D: And do you think the State is responsible for maintaining peace to a certain level? Or do you think it's more a matter of faith or community?

M: I suppose you live in a state and it has to do with a lot that is going on, I mean they have the courts for wrongdoing and they have the jails for people who are selling drugs and not availing the rules. They do have an important role I would they, as it should be. And they spend a lot of money on people who have done wrong and trying to get them back to society again and they would be help children who were born handicap and they haven't got the right homes to live their lives the state kinda steps in then and gives them some support so there are a lot of good people out there too, there really is.

D: And do you think peace is a result of one's personal or generational historical experience? Like for instance is peace a result of war or injustice, or social conflict?

M: Well, there seems to be always a certain amount of conflict between people and I suppose when you think of any conflict, take Britain for instance, the way they wanted more parts of different countries, and they wanted to take over different countries, people here in Ireland the way the Spanish came or other people came and wanted to be take over here and plant their routes and settle in and all that type of thing. There always seem to be up to best. People can be difficult, unkind, and unjust and all those things. But the majority of people are wanting peace and well I think, the majority would want peace. You can see it in the North of Ireland at the moment. They are so glad to have the peace up there but it took so long to get it, but it is good to have it now isn't it? You know I think any country should be more like its great. Sometimes what I wonder is do they want too much. They have one country and they want another country. Is there a lot of greed there? Why is it that they want so much? I would wonder sometimes. I really would.

D: I think in Britain they have this idea of an Empire. You know, so every country tries to be bigger than the other, the same way France took over a lot of countries in Africa.

M: Yes, and the British Empire took over many other places and the migrants... But a lot of trouble in a lot of places.

D: Yes, absolutely.

M: Africa was the same, you know, really, and then when my brother in-law went to Africa, in 1957, he only went there to do a course, he worked in the airways, very very clever guy he had 23 letters after his name. And in the airway she was doing a new course that had to do with the 747's I think and he was over there and he said it was so beautiful, Africa was so beautiful. He sent his wife a text saying 'Darlin Tina come at once. It's beautiful here, sell everything we own and come over' and she sold everything they own, their house, everything went and she brought their 3 children over there. But his dad was sitting at the table when the telegram came, no.....and he, his dad said 'please don't go Tina' he says, 'the African now will want their country back. They won't leave you living there for long. I can see it happening, there's going to be trouble in Africa'. And she said 'no, no, if Des says it's ok, then I'll go' and she went. And look it, they were forced out of their home. And said that if they didn't go they first of all they would plunder everything that moved, in their beautiful house and they had to walk out of their house because no money for it and he said he was going to shoot Des and Tina if they didn't get out. And their neighbour refused to go over and his wife and children went to England, and they came back the next day and shut the farmer who was there for 35 years and did they enjoy the land? Did they enjoy the crops? Did they enjoy all the work the 17 people who had been working for him had done? No they just got the torches to set fire of the whole farm. So it's like, they resent it. Foreigners being there and they were there working for very small wages and everything else you know, the Irish and the English weren't really fair with them, they weren't paying them a proper wage so there's faults on both sides I guess, really was.

D: Do you think people volunteer to go to war? Or is it a personal choice?

M: I think that there is pressure, what was your first line there?

D: Do people volunteer to go to war or is it a personal choice?

M: That's a very controversial thing, it's a case of if they see the need in some countries that they want to help they go to war but I don't think anyone would choose to go to war. I don't think it would be a personal choice ever. They see that the country that they're loyal to is badly in need of soldiers they might, they would go to I guess you know. I never knew anybody who had gone along to be a soldier at all, I always thank the lord that my sons and the grandchildren were never in any wars. I always said we have so much to be grateful for, so much to be thankful to the lord for you aren't in war, but then the peace like, since 1916 that was different. I wasn't here then so I don't... I mean I read about it but I don't know anything personally.

D: Did anybody in your family join that war?

M: No, not that I know of, not in my family, my dad lived in county Meath so he had nothing to do with it.

D: And did you say you had an uncle who was in WW1? Or am I confused?

M: He was my grand uncle, he was in WW2, he went with the eighth army, he worked for the British people and he was in the eighth army. And it was very severe and very hard, very hard, he came home looking years and years older type thing you know, but back safe. Cecil's uncle years and years ago they were in the war and coming back, their boat, his submarine he was in was torpedoed. And they were thrown into the sea. And they were rescued by some ship. And that ship coming back was torpedoed the second time, they were thrown into the sea a second time. When they got home safe to Ireland, he went down on his knees and kissed the

ground and said he'll never leave Ireland again. That was very sad, but of course all wars are sad, all wars are bad, it's all over land isn't it?

D: It seems to be a lot of it yeah. So the next question asked is, do you know anybody in your family who fought in a war which we just spoke about?

M: Yeah, 50 years ago, yeah.

D: But you also said that they, did your grand uncle ever speak about the war?

M: Not a lot, he didn't want to talk about it. He said it was just frightening and terrifying. And if ever you had someone going to war try and prevent them going. Try to stop them going. Don't let them go. Unless they really want to go themselves you know, he said it's just shocking. 'Man's inhumanity to man' he used to say. You see that on the screen like when you see the 39'-45 war was a terrible war too, you see it on the screen, we would go and see and film about it. Personally, I didn't go to many films about war, I didn't want to.

D: And do you think then that testimonies of war contribute to building peace? Or do they do the opposite?

M: Well it's a case of one side wanting their own way and the other side wanting their own way and they have to compromise in the end, don't they? Don't think I'll be very good at deciding on that question.

D: That's ok, let's move to a different one then. Do you think peace has advanced the society we live in?

M: I had a too nice quiet and gentle and loving upbringing and have an input on anything like that you know. The other emphasis was on smile and be happy and love and be generous and be kind and be grateful and all those things. So I didn't really think too much about those fighting. I prayed for them all, I really would, but that's about it.

D: So you think then that peace is something that became so, I suppose convenient, so easy to have that you know, there's still people in camps and stuff like that? Like we care about them a bit less because we are very comfortable where we are?

M: We don't care about them less, no no I would think it's the opposite. Like it really is so sad and there are mostly women and children I think, you don't see that many men, yet there are young new children there so there must be partners around but, is there anything worth all that, what do they gain? Like if you have enough that you want and there is spare, why would you want all this money and power and greed? It doesn't make sense really. But if the rulers of your country want another piece of land, they want to go to war, an ordinary person like you and I won't be able to do much about it. They usually get their own way and they can make it an order that you have to go sometimes don't they? I don't think it's an option in some cases. The stories that Des told in Africa are very very sad. Shocking. He was sorry he went. Afterwards his daughter came home one night, fell asleep at the wheel 6-week-old car they were watching for Pat at the back. She went down a ravine. He was very sorry he went.

D: And did they spend a lot of time in Africa? I think Roisin said once she went to visit him.

M: Yes, that's right.

D: Do you think peace is related to distribution and/or redistribution of wealth or ownership of property?

M: Wealth and ownership of property definitely comes into it, it does.

D: In what way?

M: In that the people living in Africa, living in a little hut in the end of Des's big garden and being paid a very small wage every day for coming up and cleaning the house and preparing meals and things like that, they didn't want that. They wanted to be like the way Des and Tina were. They wanted to be in the house and have a proper way of living and proper money in their pockets and not just pennies you know. Very unfair the amount of money they were earning. That was just very unfair. Now granted they mightn't do everything properly like. They would do it, but it might not be 10 out of 10, you could be lucky and get people who would do it pretty well, they were good out in the fields and doing the crops and everything, he didn't have fields of crops. His job in the airport was sufficient for him. And the children were very well educated, they were able to send them to the best schools and everything. His daughter in law said to me when she came over here she said 'I haven't got a job at the moment' and I said 'You'll probably get one easy enough.' 'Oh,' she said, 'I will, I speak very well and I'm well educated so I'm really sort of a cut above the Irish who don't speak too well and aren't as well educated so ill get a good job'.

D: Wow.

M: Arrogant attitude you know. Maybe the people that were working for her were very, very happy. I don't know but she was young.

D: And do you know any examples of that, of again peace relating to distribution of wealth or ownership in Ireland?

M: I don't know. Well my own, my mother's family all wanted to have good will and respect and they would invest their money in shops. One had a bakery she bought for 50 pounds, this one room for 50 pounds and she turned it into a bakery and then she bought another room and she made the first one into a shop and put the bakery in the back, and then my other aunt bought a premises she turned to a post office she earned a lot of money over the years. Now the second girl did the same. She had a post office, she earned a lot of money, she is the person I did work for, and then she had a tragedy of losing her husband when he was 30 and 4 children under 7 it was terrible. Now they were all pretty ambitious about getting shops and working and earning plenty of money, and having a good standard of life.

D: Can a state be run by a working class person?

M: Once they have the ability, I don't know, I wouldn't think so, I think you'd want to be fit about education to run Ireland for instance. You won't be able to write down on paper or make the right decisions. I would imagine that a lot of knowledge would be of great advantage but there could be somebody who's not well educated but very clever as well. I think it would be much better to have someone who knew what they were doing and let it out correctly in my opinion.

D: So I'm going to tie this to the previous elections just now, you know because Sinn Fein got a lot of votes and Sinn Fein is associated as a working class party, most of their members are/were working class people, actually Mary Lou McDonald is apparently not because she comes from Ranelagh and she went to private schools from a family with quite a bit of money. So my question is then, do you think Sinn Fein, because of their working class background, have less ability to run the country?

M: I wouldn't be qualified to answer that, I do think anybody's education is better to run the country than someone who left school when they were 12. Then some people left school

when they were 12 and did very well in business and politics and lots of things, but it's very complicated. It's very complicated I think, it's like running a big business isn't it really. I'm very proud of Leo Varadkar of how he handled this crisis. I thought he did really well with ordinary education as well. And he had, being a doctor he could understand the seriousness of it. He had to do his thing and it is still very serious. It really is. Terrible stories there. You could be here today and gone tomorrow, you could be dead tomorrow.

D: Very scary, really, really scary. What is solidarity for you?

M: I'm not sure I have any strong feelings on that to be truthful with you. You'd be probably wiser than I would be.

D: I don't think so. Do you think solidarity is something that is something that is practiced in your surroundings?

M: I don't know really and truly. I never gave it any consideration.

D: Do you think solidarity is a factor in the production of peace?

M: I suppose it could be, yeah. I'm not very good at that at all.

D: That's ok. It's just something maybe to think about. How does wage labour bring you together with or separates you from other workers?

M: Well, I don't know what you mean by that either because I never went from one job to another and try to get more wages and all that because in honest truth my aunt who's had that terrible problem of bringing up her 4 children on her own, and then 2 of her children when they were 17 couldn't walk properly and they ended up, they were both first the eldest one when she was 17 she was for 26 years in a wheelchair and the second when she was 17, she was 27 years in a wheelchair because her father had bad heart and they inherited that, they both had bad heart, but it didn't show until they were 17. Mairead walked up the aisle when she was 32 for Gregory's christening, she was his godmother and that's the last time she ever walked. And it was all so sad. Beautiful, lovely girl, so that I didn't go from one place to another looking for more wages and better conditions and all that sort of thing. I decided I'd give her the time I had and then I didn't even give it up when I was married. So I didn't know a lot about gaining more wages and I think you know, it's unfair to make people work for small money, no doubt about it. I thought it was very unfair in Africa. Positively even in Ireland you can get caught in jobs sometimes that they don't get money they deserve perhaps. Things improved over the years. There's a great wage set now isn't it?

D: How is peace influenced by employment and working conditions? You touched on this a second ago with paying people the right amount of money but maybe you want to expand on this a bit more?

M: The standard of living, the standard, I suppose, people want to have a good standard of living. They won't want to go to war. They'll want peace in their land and a peace in their home, a peace in their families. And that makes a big difference, it really does. Like the poverty of the people in Africa caused them to want to get back to their own, to take their own country back. And then they kinda ask yourself a question why would Britain want to go in there in the first place? Why isn't anybody giving the African people a loan? I know this much, we are

giving money to the African people since I was 5 I think I used to bring money to the nuns for the poor African people who haven't got money, So there's a lot of corruption in the government there I think and the corruption in the government over there causes all the trouble. Any country I think, if they have a nice way of life and good rulers and I suppose honesty comes into it, if they are honest people in the government and they are not too greedy, some of them are very greedy. So it's a case of I suppose, trying to be fair with your workers I guess. And share your profits. You got to be sharing, helping them really. Like sharing a bag of sweets, it's a nice thing to share around that kinda thing I think, so I think you should share the prosperity of a country with all the people and of course the housing is such a dark and ever-there problem. Housing was always hard to get. My mum and dad had spent a good while looking before they got the home they wanted. It's hard to make a difference. Mum and dad never thought to go to war. No no no, they always had plenty a lot to spare you know they just wanted a bigger house, a better house that sort of thing. And that went all as well so finding a house can be hard sometimes and people get discontented and my grandmother used to say 'the devil finds work for idle hands to do' she'd never had anybody hid it, so she'd say 'come and do something' 'come and clean the phone' or 'come and cut the meat' or 'come and do the shopping' or you know. When people are busy, they'll never be thinking about wars I suppose and not being nice to people and that sort of thing. I suppose if the boys are not happy at home, you see that's what I thought about the working mothers, if the mothers are home when their children come home, they tell them everything when they come from school. When the mothers are away in the office and they don't come home until 6 o'clock there's no bother telling them, they'll be making dinner then anyhow. I think the way of life years ago, where the women would stay at home and knit nice jumpers and make nice dresses and do the baking and all the different things, although it's nice to be brainy and have a good job of course and being well paid, it's nearly more important to be home with the children and look after them well and listen to them when they come home. They have a lot to tell when they come in, but they won't have a lot to tell later on when you come home at 6 o'clock. You know you are very busy and everybody has a lot to do and homework and everything. You have to give the children the time when they are small to teach them all the things they need to know. That's just my opinion. I mean some people who are working mothers are great, I think it's better if they have enough money to stay at home.

D: Do you think the EU brought peace to Ireland?

M: That's a good question. At the time I didn't think it was a good idea. I didn't think that all those men who gathered together could really be able to agree, because sometimes 3 or 4 men together don't agree and maybe that women would agree better. I don't know but it did work out afterwards. Everybody said it was good for Ireland. Now the fishermen mightn't have said so, because they lost a lot. They couldn't fish in the water that they wanted to fish in and there were people who didn't benefit by it but most generally we had different roads and better roads and all those sorts of things. From the prayer point of view, I don't think I know too much about how they effect prayer in Ireland. I really don't. I think the majority of Irish people became more broad minded generally and maybe that will bring them back to prayer. But I couldn't say, I'm not really clever enough to know whether they, if it was good prayer wise or peace, I'd say it was good for peace, it was really, I mean if they think the North of Ireland wouldn't it be wonderful if Ireland was united? And maybe we will, you may see it

in your lifetime. But I always think of Bertie Ahern particularly of all the politicians that he was superb in trying to arrange the peace initiative of the North. Maybe if they could get him enrolled with his views with different politicians it will be good. Because from the prayer point of view, I guess it was good. I'd say, it was very versatile for a lot more people to be in touch with things that aren't in Ireland and I'd say it would benefit Ireland but I wouldn't be positive.

D: How does European peace relate to internal immigration?

M: How does what?

D: How does European peace so the peace between all the European countries relate to internal immigration?

M: I don't know a lot about it immigration really and truly, I know that if there is no work available here for people, so years ago when the recession hit it was good for people to immigrate but, then so many people came to Ireland and personally I didn't know many of them either so only what I'd read in the papers like, some people came in and made lovely homes in Ireland and I suppose they thought it was right for them and the best thing to do. Everyone has to do what they think is best for themselves. The government seems to encourage it and want it, so it must have been worthwhile. Personally, I didn't know many people who came to Ireland and I only knew one who went away to Birmingham and came back so I think many Irish go away but they do want to come home again when things improve. Like the things weren't good here and they didn't want to stay but there's no work or anything so when the job situation improved and we got back on our feet again, they were glad to come back. That's just how I saw it. I mean I'd be always friendly and nice when they came. People across the road now have rented a house and they are from Lithuania, and they love being in Ireland and they seem to be quite a lot of them coming and going to that house across the road. But personally, I don't know many people, I wouldn't be qualified to say really.

D: And... Let's see what you'll think of the next question then, how do you think peace is related to relations with countries in other countries and in other continents, so not in Europe necessarily, and immigration from there?

M: Do you know what it is? I live in a little world of my own and I don't really think too far ahead to say like, do the African people like it here, who come here do they like it. They seem to like it, and the Indians, the people from India who came to work in Beaumont hospital and live in Ireland. They are charming and delightful and they seem to love it here and work happily here and their children go to school here and everything. Everything seems to be working out good, but I know a few of them. They play cricket on the green in Beaumont and when we go to church on Sunday they have 1 section of the church with Indian people, foreign people who are here. They are mostly from India I think. But I did have reason to go to the hospital in Beaumont and I met a doctor there from Africa and he did not appeal to me one bit, he was not nice to me at all. He did not deal with my...I had an ulcer on my arm and he dealt with it very badly. And shouted at me and said 'there's no such thing as a rodent ulcer, you don't know what you're talking about'. It wasn't really what I wanted to hear, I wanted to have this ulcer taken from my arm and you know. There's no need to go into all the details there but it was very disappointing and upsetting and I didn't do much about it except go private but they didn't do it either. And then they sent me back to Beaumont, it was very stressful at the time, it took me 5 months to get the ulcer taken off my arm, a small ulcer, regardless of the fact that I had insurance. So that has to do with

the African doctor, but you can't just pick on one person, there's probably dozens of lovely doctors in Ireland who are from Africa, Harare or wherever, I think he was from Harare. I met a very charming priest who was working here and he lived in Africa and Roisin said to him, he was in a prayer meeting one night, and Roisin said do you have any sisters? And he said I have 19 brothers and sisters. His father got married 4 times. And everybody went quiet you know and did they all live in one house in Africa. The dad lives in the house and the 4 wives live in the house and the 19 children in the house and he was one of them. And he was charming and delightful but their way of life would be very different to ours. It really was.

D: What do you think is the overall... Do you think generally speaking, Irish people are accepting of all the immigrants in? Or do you think there's a bit of conflict?

M: I think they are very good, very accepting. I think the Irish are very warm and welcoming but you would know better than I would.

D: I think they are, I mean, next to other countries, Ireland is doing very well. People are being very respectful to one another of course there's always cases here and there.

M: Yeah, I think our parents have a lot to do with it too. Because my parents always said to us to be nice and kind to everybody. We moved to Greystones in the year 1939 and there were only 2000 people in Greystones and the majority of them were Church of Ireland. Like at that stage, the Archbishop Mc Quaid was not very charismatic. He was over the county Wicklow and Dublin area. I think he was over all of Ireland but I'm not quite sure of that, but anyhow he didn't encourage people to be too welcoming or too nice to the Church of Ireland and that was a simple thing. So over the years everything changed, and it's a very busy place now, several different religions there. But at that time it was kinda, where we lived. Our neighbours were our friends and we never had any problems. Really nice, exceptionally nice.

D: And how do you think peace relates to climate change?

M: Climate change, how it relates to climate change, I don't know how it can relate to climate change. As you go along everybody has to accept climate change, don't they really? No matter what religion you are or how peaceful you are, you just have to take it as it comes. Things have changed quite a bit climate wise, you got to praise the lord that the sun is shining, you got to praise the lord that the rain comes down when we need it and that's it you know. Maybe the farmers pray for rain, farmers pray for sun I don't know but I don't pray for that. I'm afraid. I just want to pray for a peaceful kind of living.

D: OK, so one last question, would you consider peace building a political endeavor?

M: Well, I would, but it's a very personal question as well isn't it really? You know, my mum was very peaceful and my dad, and I grew up in that vein. With children with the dad has left and the children are being raised by their mum, and the mums are working and they are over tired and have too much to do and there's friction. It mightn't be very easy for people to be peaceful. But if we could affect the housing once more and get them somewhere nice for people to live at a reduced rate, what people can afford, which they are doing at the moment but it's taking time, then that would make a big difference it really would. I suppose, at the end of the day, we need more prayer for these things. But how are we going to get peace.. there's a prayer we say which would you like to hear the pray we say at the end of all our prayers we say this prayer:

Let there be peace on earth
And let it begin with me
Let There Be Peace on Earth
The peace that was meant to be
With God as our Father
Brothers all are we
Let me walk with my brother
In perfect harmony.
Let peace begin with me
Let this be the moment now.
With every step I take
Let this be my solemn vow
To take each moment and live
Each moment in peace eternally
Let there be peace on earth
And let it begin with me

D: Beautiful.

M: So, that sums it up, you know.

D: I think it does, I'm gonna stop the stop the interview now because I think it's the best note to stop it on, so thank you so much, Marie, we really appreciate it.