

## February-March 2016 Report

Philip Whelton, Irish Mission Worker – Arklow

The children, youth and teens clubs continue to give us encouragement and we are constantly amazed how many of them attend each week. The Wednesday Bible Club has over 70 who come regularly and 34 of them never missed once all the way up to Christmas. Most of them are very attentive to the Bible lessons and are not afraid to ask questions. We are thankful to God for enabling us to serve this way and give thanks for the amazing leaders who come each week and faithfully serve Him.

The children are always hyper, and probably giving some of them chocolate each week does not help! The Youth and Teens Clubs continue to have new people joining each week and it has been a great way to build up relationships with them and to earn their trust and respect. In the weeks leading up to Christmas they raised funds to buy a huge Christmas hamper for a family in town where one member is terminally ill. This family came to the Club one evening to pick up their hamper and this left a profound impact on the Club members to know that they played a part in helping somebody else.

The teens' work in particular continues to give me challenges and opportunities to share my faith. I am building up relationships with quite a number of them and always looking for ways to demonstrate my faith. Over the last few months I have had several good conversations with some of them and invariably the questions concerning God's existence etc. keep coming up. With that in mind, a friend of mine and myself are preparing a few sessions on an apologetics based programme called "Let's Reason." The idea is to meet with some of the teens on a monthly basis, as part of the Teens Club, to present reasons for what and why we believe. Please pray about this, as the sessions will be short and it is something the teens would like as well. We always tell them that people are free to make their own choices, but then must also live with the consequences of their choices.

Some of the local churches in the community plan to hold an Alpha Course in the weeks leading up to Easter. As I write this, the details are still being worked out, and hopefully there will be great support from the churches in the community as we organize this. It will be the first outreach programme the churches have done together for a number of years and hopefully there will be many that will come and benefit from such a programme. They have been well supported in the past and so we can expect a good turnout and participation.

As we look ahead, those of you who keep up-to-date with us will know that we are well underway in preparing for our Holiday Bible Club in August. As we have to limit our numbers to about 225, we start registering in March and it's usually booked out in a few weeks. This is disappointing for those who miss out, but at the same time we give thanks and glory to God that the Holiday Bible Club continues to be an important place to be at in the first week in August. Please pray as we put the plans together, that God will bring us the leaders of His choice and that we will all seek His guidance and wisdom in every discussion we make.