

INCO Living in Crete
Mike Dornan: Championing Wellbeing and Community Care at INCO



Mike Dornan is responsible for the INCO Wellbeing and Pastoral Service. We asked him to tell us a little about himself and his role within INCO.

I was brought up in Belfast, Northern Ireland during the 1960s and attended school in the city centre.

There were a lot of social, economic and political inequalities in Northern Ireland at that time and it was probably this that encouraged my interest in Social justice and challenging the accepted way of doing things. Coincidentally, my wife-to-be, although we didn't meet for another 10 years, was working for a charity with a similar ethos. This year, Gill and I will be celebrating our 36th wedding anniversary.

Following my graduation, I worked in Financial Services in Glasgow and London before moving back to Northern Ireland.

In 2006, I was accepted for training by the Church of Ireland studying Theology at Trinity College in Dublin. I was ordained as a priest in 2009 and in 2014 was installed in two rural parishes in Co. Londonderry.

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Being a conservative organisation, I found it frustratingly difficult to get official approval to do new things. My Bishop (Boss) said 'ask for forgiveness rather than permission.' Just in case it goes wrong.

Our two children were grown and settled in the UK, so three and a half years ago, shortly before the restrictions brought on by COVID, I decided to take early retirement and move to our holiday home near Kalo Chorio.

I joined INCO two years ago because I was encouraged to by someone who thought I would be a good match. Over my 2-year tenure on the committee, we had to spend a lot of our time navigating Greek bureaucracy, but at the same time developing and providing pastoral support for members.

This has included driver rotas for members attending medical appointments in Heraklion, liaising with the local hospital to assist with organising discharge home support, hosting the Istron coffee morning and providing emotional and spiritual support when requested, including bereavement, leading funerals and blessing marriages.

Hopefully, I will be launching the Bereavement Support group from 21st May. This will be a mutually supportive self-help group for members in which the group themselves will determine what happens next.

For information on the Bereavement Support Group you can contact Mike on +306993428584 or email wellbeing@inconews.com