

The Wisdom of Proverbs

“People live in one another’s shelter”
and
“There is no strength without unity”

Meitheal (Work Team)

In times past, many is the farmer that said goodbye to their able bodied family at the quay of emigration, no longer having the family at hand to help with the work of the harvest or of footing the turf. However, the neighbours would come to their aid, knowing the meaning of the proverb “People live in one another’s shelter”. In that time of need, the neighbours would come together as a ‘meitheal’ or work team, generously helping each other out without seeking payment or recognition. They understood the importance of the dependence on neighbours.

As another proverb says: “There is no strength without unity”, as it is with the help of the ‘meitheal’ that the strength and ability came to get the work done. Without the understanding and help of neighbours the harvest wouldn’t be possible and everyone would be worse off because of that.

We see here the outcome when mutual dependency and cooperation is encouraged in a community by developing the spirit of ‘meitheal’ or teamwork: they succeed and everyone benefits, especially in times of need.

Revival of Meitheal

Referring to our current economic recession, An Taoiseach, Brian Cowen, has said that there is a need to revive the spirit of ‘meitheal’ in our communities, so that we would once again support one another. As Christians, we should understand this full well. Based on our love for one another and for our neighbour, we should be willing to develop a ‘meitheal’ team in our neighbourhoods, in our workplaces, or in other places where we see a need. From that effort, the community will be stronger as we all do the tasks that God has given us opportunity to fulfil.

In conclusion, can you think of small needs in your community that you could help to alleviate with the help of a ‘meitheal’ team? You might find some ideas from the following web site: www.loveyourneighbour.ie. Be encouraged to take the opportunity as it presents itself!

From Him, the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.
(Eph 4: 16)