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JUNE 2020

Racism is a reality here in Ireland. In a few years we have moved from being a homogenous society to being a multi-ethnic one. Three areas where this is very apparent are:

- The segregation of the Travelling Community
- The existence of direct provision centres for asylum seekers
- A widespread distrust of ethnic differences

However, things are changing. Some positive moves towards inclusivity are:

- The resounding success of the passing of a referendum on marriage equality in May 2015
- Literacy schemes in primary schools now reflect ethnic diversity
- The Immigrant Council of Ireland, in conjunction with the transport authority, run an annual campaign. Its aim is to promote diversity among transport staff and it sends a clear message that racism on public transport will not be tolerated.

The council also undertakes research. One area it is focussing is the rise of Islamophobia here. It is working with members of Muslim communities, providing them with opportunities to represent themselves.

For myself, I have spoken about Sufism in a meditation centre in Dublin during a multi-faith evening, and have befriended a Syrian family to help them integrate into Irish society.

I lead the Dances of Universal Peace locally and they promote the values of all traditions. I have worked in a voluntary capacity as a tutor in a centre for migrants in Dublin which seeks to help integration through personal contact and the development of language skills. This has provided me with an opportunity to reflect on my own blind spots regarding racial difference.