

# medical school news

Ireland: Irish CMF Conference

Jenny Thompson and Abigail Nelson report



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This year's conference took place in November in the Downton Abbey-esque surroundings (think four-poster beds!) of Castledaly Manor, County Westmeath. The Cork contingent put the rest of us to shame, being the only medical school to make it on time! Other attendees soon arrived from Queen's University Belfast, the three Dublin medical schools, and Galway. In total, 40 students, three doctors and five speakers and seminar leaders attended. It was encouraging to have representatives from Galway present, which is a huge answer to prayer; two years ago there was no CMF group there.

Over the weekend we prayed specifically for each Irish CMF group. Common themes were: prayer for good relationships both within the CMF groups and with the corresponding CU, increased membership and wisdom in leadership. We prayed for more involvement from native Irish Christians (as most CMF students in the Irish Republic are international students) and for links with Christian doctors involved in CMF - again rare in the Irish Republic.

The theme for the weekend was 'Medical Ethics: living and speaking for Jesus'. Our main speaker Giles Cattermole spoke on Worldviews, the Word, Worship, Wisdom and Witness. Perhaps some came to these talks with vague memories of first year lectures on non-maleficence and justice! However, Giles expertly dissected worldviews past and present, before demonstrating how all except the Christian worldview contradict themselves. Each talk was pre-eminently Christ-centred.



Giles' reminder of the simple framework used in the CMF Confident Christianity course to help in sharing the gospel found us all chanting 'God, Man, God, What if I do? What if I don't?' and practising sharing the gospel with each other in one minute.

Saturday seminars included: understanding and applying the Bible, witnessing to patients, and discipleship. Local committees met in the afternoon to share ideas and discuss issues. Some attendees used their free time to brush up on anatomy, whilst less academically-minded medics enjoyed the playground and happily jumped in piles of leaves!

Jesus' promise that 'where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them' (Matthew 18:20) was clearly apparent at this weekend. Attendees left challenged to preach the gospel and live out our ethics, being careful not to merely preach the ethics! Above all, we left with the reminder of the weekend's key verse: 'So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God' (1 Corinthians 10:31). ■