

COLLEGIANS

Ebony Badman

Class of 2013

When people think of Ireland; consistent rain, Guinness and leprechauns come to mind. But the Emerald Isle is so much more. It is a country that bands together, its gentle people with a core of steel and most importantly a heart of gold take care of each other.

I spent the most amazing ten months living in Ireland's oldest town Waterford. Waterford which is about the size of Dubbo is 1100 years old and was founded by the Vikings. Its cobbled streets and medieval walls create an air of enchantment. I went to work with an amazing group people who worked with ECM – European Christian Mission. While Ireland is a predominantly Catholic country it is unknown exactly how many of these have a genuine faith in Jesus. Catholicism is much more a cultural thing then faith. So I went to share the love and grace of Jesus with those who had not heard.

So what did my mission trip look like? Well I drank lots of cups of tea and ate lots of cake. Building a relationship and rapport with the people is so important, so you talk about the weather till you build that trust. But I did do more than drink tea, eat cake and talk about the weather. I helped run a kids club on Thursday afternoons and a youth group, organised women's events and was a part of a local church plant. It was wonderful to meet the children and share with them the bible.

A major part of the last century has been the cultural revival. The Irish language, music and dance have been promoted throughout the south. I have done Irish dancing for the past fifteen years so I joined the local dance school. It was the most beautiful blessing. It can take months to work your way into the community but because I could dance I was immediately thought of as Irish. It was so much fun and an absolute delight.

Having come home, my time away showed me how small my world vision was. I had never considered how confronting living in another culture was, the securities our country provides us with and the stressed fast pace of life. No matter how busy you are, or where you have to be, when you meet someone you stop and chat. People come first and, time: well it doesn't matter.

