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Youth Group of St Peter's Liverpool say "Thank you to CWL!"

There are not enough words to express how grateful we are for your ongoing kindness throughout the year in preparation for our pilgrimage to Lourdes.

At St Peter's, our Lourdes journey begins from the moment we receive our letters of acceptance in January right up until our thank you mass in October. This preparation lasts over 10 months and is something we wholly commit ourselves to. Therefore, when we achieve our goals we

know we should be proud of not just ourselves, but of our community who have watched us and allowed us the opportunity to grow in our faith during our preparation. Our family, the people who support us throughout our entire journey, continues to grow through the people we meet and the things we do. So we are saying thank you, to you, our supporting family. Reaching our

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GET THE COMPLETE 2015 AGM ROUND-UP

16th-18th OCTOBER PAGE

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Meet the 2016 CWL Presidential Candidates...PAGE



See pages 3 and 11

An Advent of Wellbeing - by Alison Love

Here are a few ideas to help you along the Advent road this year, bearing in mind our 'Five Ways to Wellbeing.' I hope that they will help you celebrate Advent, rather than see the month of December as a rush to the 25th.

Connect: I know that with postage being what it is, the temptation is to avoid sending a stack of cards to all and sundry on your 'list' and donate to a favourite Charity instead. Some of us will send Christmas greetings via the Internet and social media. That can be great fun too. This year, make sure that the people on your list who do not have access to a computer get a card. Start a little bit earlier on your list so that you have time to write a short message rather than just your usual 'Alison and family'. Do not forget those hardworking folk in the Parish. Sacristan, flower arranger. Organist and Choir/Cantor. Remember people who could really do with a card on their mantelpiece as they may not be getting many.

Be Active: The elements can conspire against any outdoor activities this time of year but get a winter walk in when you can, even if it is to the next bus stop rather than the nearest. Although fasting is not a requirement, I have (at the moment) promised to go easy on the good things, like chocolate and make sure I don't over indulge at Party time. Dancing is good, so feel free to emulate your favourite 'Strictly' star and try a few moves on the dance floor.

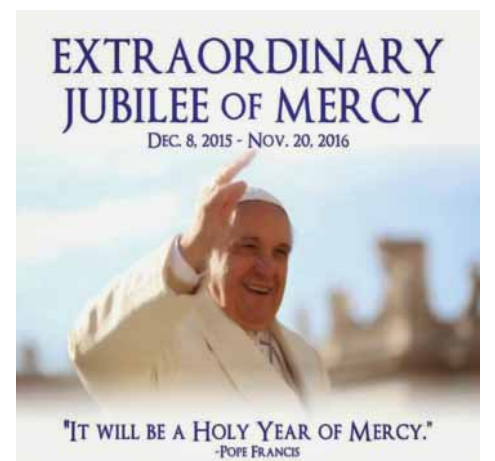
Take Notice: If you manage a walk, take a look around at what nature is up to. Not just soggy trees. Some of those trees have shed their leaves, making it easier to see the birds. You will be able to identify that pesky bird that kept you awake half the night singing away. The Christmas Robin can get a bit confused by street lighting this time of year and think it is dawn at three in the morning. Take time to enjoy a sunny frosty morning and the sparkling of the cob webs. Praise God for WOW moments and cheerful Robins.

Keep Learning: Make something from one of those Christmas Idea magazines. Research and celebrate one of the saints, who's feast day falls in Advent. St Nicholas is on the 6th and can be shared with the younger members of the family or parish. My favourite is St Lucy on the 13th. I do advise caution as far as Candle Crowns go for this Saint though.

Give yourself time to do a daily reflection on Advent. There are many books around and your Parish will be delighted to sell you one. Or on line. Tweet or Face book a few thoughts.

Give: Your support for Parish Advent activities. Have a Christmas 'Bake Off' party for the lonely and vulnerable members of your parish. Get to know someone in your parish, you have not spoken to before and if they are a woman, invite them along to your next CWL meeting.

Whatever you do this Advent Season do something different and then make a difference. Most important get to Mass on Christmas day, happy and praising God for the FREE GIFT of his Son. Jesus, our Lord and Saviour.



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National President's Blog

Here is a snippet from my blog. The full version is available on our CWL website at <http://www.catholicwomensleague.org/index.php/national-presidents-blog/>

Saturday 30 May - Lovely time at Salford Branch AGM, the last of my visits for Branch AGMs. Great turn out of members and I see they have been training their chaplain well (pouring the tea). Cheque for £1500 was presented to Mrs Christine Joyce on behalf of Grace's Place Children's Hospice. Thanks to all for a lovely day and also for the Shower of Roses special Mass enrolment, what a thoughtful gift.

Monday 2nd June I attended the funeral of our Branch Chaplain Fr Jim McCormack who died very suddenly. Fr Jim was a lovely person in all ways and a very great support to the Catholic Women's League in the Diocese of Brentwood. The church in Clacton-on-Sea was overflowing with people – just showing the great love and regard for Fr Jim that he so richly deserved. Bishop Alan lead the cortege from the church.

On Wednesday 3rd June I attended the Brentwood Branch Pilgrimage to Aylesford Priory in Kent. We were blessed by the weather and remembered Fr Jim during the mass with his favourite hymn and also in singing the Paradisium at the end of mass.

Saturday 27th June, I attended the National Board of Catholic Women's AGM held at Romero House in London. The new president was appointed as Mrs Maureen Meatcher. Thanks to Pearl Clarke for all her hard work as President during the past 3 years.

On Monday 29 June I attended mass and a reception at Westminster Cathedral Hall given by the Papal Nuncio. Grateful thanks for the acknowledgement of CWL and it's work in England and Wales and also internationally. In the Cathedral, the plaque at the mosaic of St Joan of Arc, is a previous donation from CWL. I also attended the CWL Communications Team meeting to further discuss events etc which will be of interest to readers of CWL news and also matters which will be reported at the AGM in Torquay. I also attended the inaugural mass of a new Section which is setting up in Custom House parish, Brentwood Diocese, a super



event with so many lovely people to meet and great food afterwards! All good wishes go to them for the future.

It's been a quiet summer for visits but a great deal of work has been done on proposed new Structure for CWL. Earlier in June I attended special meetings with the Accountants and Solicitors to discuss changes we would like to propose to the working structure of the League. I attended one special meeting in July with follow-up and then the National Executive meeting at the end of August. An explanatory video has been made available on USB for all sections, please contact your Branch Officers if you haven't received it. Make sure you have it and that you send in your

vote by 31 January 2016. You are being asked to vote in principle to the restructuring of the League (along the lines outlined in the video with accompanying text distributed to all members of the League, September 2015). If the vote is for the proposed structure, the process to follow will then be detailed discussions at the Officers' Annual Meeting in February 2016 with the final proposal being presented for formal voting at AGM 2016 in Southport. A very important time for CWL so please make sure you are fully aware of what is being proposed. If you have any questions or comments please send them to natsec@cwlhq.org.uk.



Full versions of my blog and the new Recipes page can be found on

www.catholicwomensleague.org

and photos etc on the facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/CWLEngWales>

COPY DEADLINE DATE

1st March 2016

Any amendments to distribution, notify the National Secretary

Presidential Candidates

Margaret Richards



I am standing for the position of National President, having been proposed by Cardiff Branch and seconded by Clifton Branch. The National Executive, of which I am a Regional Officer, have listened to all members over the last two years and we have proposed a way forward to you all. I would like to help the League flourish in the future. We are now just 3000 members and each one of us must play our part for the survival of our League. In my first year as National President in 2010 I felt we needed to look to the future and get a professional firm in to advise us, but it would have cost a lot of money and the Executive did not want to do this. Then I tried to cut the number of Regions from 7 to 5, relating to the Archdioceses but again the Branch Officers did not agree. I also thought about a merger with the Union of Catholic Mothers, but their Executive rejected that. So here we are again in 2015 in the same position! I support the proposed plan for restructuring and if it is agreed we will take the next steps at the Officers Annual meeting in February 2016. Membership numbers are the crucial factor. Our League has been very fruitful over the 110 years of its life. In both World Wars we played an important part in caring for and supporting the armed forces and our work for Relief and Refugees still continues today. Margaret Fletcher founded the League for the Education of Women, as well as caring for our fellow men and women in the church and in our towns and villages. Technology has advanced rapidly and the ability to use the

media for meetings has caused us quite a problem. The work in the Parishes used to be done by our members alone but now there are many other groups involved. We all value the friendship and support, the meetings and retreats, but is this what is wanted by the women of today? We have a very romantic view of the League as most of us have been members for a long time. However we need more than this to attract others. Do you feel the time has come to give thanks for the years of Charity, Work and Loyalty that we have all experienced and celebrate the work we have done? Are we really able to continue as a viable organisation for much longer? We need to pray about this during the next two years, asking the guidance of the Holy Spirit and St Margaret Clitherow.

Margaret Valentine



In 1970 a rather younger & slimmer version of myself, stepped forward and joined the Catholic Women's League in Newcastle upon Tyne. I was drawn to the engaging nature of the women and the values they espoused - values drawn from right back when, in 1906, Margaret Fletcher founded the League. Forty five years on, I am stood here thinking about the one great value that back in 1906 was the core to the League's existence - the importance of personal contact. Looking around conference today it is pleasing to see so many familiar faces. I've met many of you during my time at the CWL, either in my time as National Treasurer, as a local representative or "one of the crowd" over a cup of tea at one of our

meetings. (I remember going to the AGM for UCM Scotland in Glasgow and on the Friday evening a lady got stuck in the lift, and was there for quite awhile until the lift engineer came. We all stood outside the lift speaking to the lady and we recited the rosary until the engineer came. When he arrived we were just finishing the last verse of "Guardian Angel from Heaven so Bright") He was our Guardian Angel. I felt we were all brought together in love & friendship and this is what all organizations are about . Of course many of our friends aren't here today and we should take some time to remember them when we can. And this goes to the root of a challenge that we face in our organization today. Our membership is not getting any younger and as we know our numbers have been declining year on year for some time now. Recruiting new members has been difficult and I believe The League needs a review of how it recruits, where it recruits and how we run our organization. To the latter point you are aware of the changes the National Executive would like to put in place. The administrative burden placed on our members at a local level has done little to encourage more active participation in the running of the CWL. The changes, if implemented well, should allow greater participation and activity without the worry of "managing the detail". I sincerely believe this is a good step towards removing some of the barriers to the effectiveness of the League. But I believe there are other challenges we need to face and this is why I am standing for the position of the National President. Before I go in to more detail it is probably worth me telling you a little more about myself. My career was centred around Lloyds TSB. The bank saw many changes during my time there and I fulfilled many roles from cashier to Customer Service Manager. Two things were always constant however - my desire to serve and my own strong work ethic. I never shyd away from a task in hand and was always prepared to get stuck in and help others. My "second career" started in 1964 when I married my loving thoughtful husband Michael. We quickly had

three children , who I'm pleased to say have all grown into strong individuals in their own right. This experience of work and family has served me well in my time with the CWL. I have held several positions including Section Chairman several times , Section Treasurer several times, Branch President for three years. Branch Treasurer for six years and seven years as National Treasurer. So.....I've had a great career, raised a wonderful family and served many roles within the CWL. You would not be forgiven therefore for asking why I now want to stand for National President---a role that requires energy, clarity of purpose and a set of skills that many would not look to use at the age of 74. But I believe strongly that there are challenges ahead of us in the CWL that need consultative leadership and a strong desire to do what the members want. I believe passionately in our members - we are and have been the life blood of our organisation and the future direction of the league should be set by all of us. There may be many who are prepared to give up and allow over a 100 years of service and well doing to disappear through lack of will. I believe we need to survive and thrive as an organisation but importantly want to make sure that is what the membership want. You, the members are the Catholic Women's League and your voice is the most important here. If I am to be elected National President I will seek to hear your voice, hear your concerns, understand how you want the League to evolve and importantly to understand what it is you want your National Executive to do for you. I also believe we have become complacent about how we attract new members. The demographic of the Catholic Church has been changing for some time- I'm not sure our thinking and action has followed suit. I will make it a priority to think about new members and engage across more branches to better understand their local population. We all need to be a part of this. However if we are sustain our future for another 20-30-50 years . Most importantly this is your league and you are the people who are my prime concern.

Thank you

Working together against Human Trafficking

WUCWO, under the direction of Sister Gabriella Bottani, director of Talitha Kum, together with several other international organisations including UISG, Caritas Internationalis, the Pontifical Council for Migrants, the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, and 'Slaves No More', is preparing for the International Day Against Human Trafficking which will be celebrated on the 8th February 2016, feast of St. Bakhita, in Rome and across the world.



St. Bakhita was born in Sudan's embattled Darfur region in 1868. Captured at the age of 9 years, she was sold into slavery, first in her country and later in Italy. After her life as a slave, she became a Canossian religious sister in Italy where she lived and worked for 45 years. She died in 1947. In 2000 she was declared a saint by the Pope St. John Paul II. As a result of the kind of life she lived, St. Bakhita is often promoted as a patron saint for the victims of slavery and trafficked persons.

CWL - Philippines

The members of the Catholic Women's League of the Philippines take care of land donated to them and have planted many trees, flowers and plants in order to have a peaceful nook where anyone can go and take time to rest, known as Mary's Woods. The project was envisioned as one of a nationwide reforestation and beautification and has since been replicated all across the country from parish grounds to public parks or vacant land. The latest project was Our Lady's Garden within the Manila Cathedral grounds, inaugurated by Cardinal Antonio Tagle.



Our Lady's Catechists

The most recent OLC event was our Autumn Study Day on 3rd October which was held in the picturesque city of York, the place where our patron, St. Margaret Clitheroe lived and was martyred. The Study Day was held in St Wilfrid's Church, a stone's throw from York Minster. The day was an uplifting mix of prayer, discussion, socialising, a quiz, and learning.

We began and ended the day with the Prayer of the Church, led by our Spiritual

Director, Fr. Harry Curtis, and we joined the congregation of St Wilfrid's for Holy Mass. Our speaker was Fr. Kevin Melody O.Carm. who is a Carmelite Friar and Parish Priest of the Church of Our Lady in York. Fr. Kevin spoke on St Teresa of Avila in this, the fifth centenary of her birth, concentrating on the legacy that she has left to us in the present day. Teresa was a Carmelite nun, who exemplified the fundamental Carmelite attributes of prayer, community and service. Teresa wrote books which told us of her

experiences in prayer and on her spiritual journey, not that she wanted us to slavishly follow her way but to encourage us on our spiritual road. For Teresa the point of prayer is to meet Jesus, the Jesus of the Gospels and to open ourselves to be transformed by him. Fr Kevin made us aware that Teresa, a sixteenth century Spanish mystic, can still have a message for us today. Our Chairman, Beryl Wakefield, will finish her term of office next April and nominations are requested for a successor. Nomination

forms are available. The closing date will be the 24th February. Posters and Application Forms for the OLC Conference and AGM, 1st – 3rd April 2016 are also available. The theme for the conference is 'The Family' and the speakers will be the Rt. Rev. Peter Doyle, Bishop of Northampton, and Canon Michael Cooley. The conference will be held at Kings Park Conference Centre, Northampton. For details contact the Secretary, Sue Andrews, email: suem.andrews@hotmail.co.uk

Readers' Letters

Dear Editor,

On Sunday the 4th of October 2015, I was privileged to attend Mass at the Church of St. Peter and St. Michael, in the Archdiocese of Liverpool. It was a Mass of thanksgiving prepared by the Youth of St. Peter's, for a successful, happy and holy Pilgrimage to Lourdes.

The testimonies of the youngsters were wonderful to hear, they had found that helping the disabled pilgrims to have a complete pilgrimage by taking them from place to place, was a most rewarding experience.

The young people said that going to Lourdes had strengthened their faith, all vowed to return next year.

The group were assisted with travel expenses by a grant from CWL Charity Funds, for which we were thanked. It was money well spent. I hope the joy and wonder last for the rest of their lives.

God Bless Sally Hamp
Region 1

Dear Editor,

I attended the Annual Public Meeting of the Charity Commission on Wednesday Sept 16th at Dean's Yard, by Westminster Abbey. This was the 4th time I had been. The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed about 100 Trustees of various Charities. He told us that the Commission had had a difficult summer. Difficult both for the charity sector but, most of all for the beneficiaries whom it seeks to serve. Confidence had been shaken and it's restoration was their priority. The press had exposed the shocking fundraising practices of some of our best known charities. The sudden collapse of Kids Company and the British Association for Adoption and Fostering has given concerns over finance and governance. Financially, austerity continues to test us all. Charities have felt this and so too has the Commission. The annual budget for the Commission being reduced from £40 million to £21 million. He stressed the importance of the publication, The Essential Trustee, and all trustees must read this carefully before taking on responsibility for their charity. The Annual Lecture was given by the Rt

Hon Frank Field who is a Catholic M.P. He spoke about our responsibilities to the poor of our country. He said Britain is now the possessor of 715,000 millionaires. 117 billionaires and many other wealth creators! Some billionaires have pledged to give away a large proportion of their fortunes to charities. He spoke about the days when Cadbury, Fry and Rowntree gave work to thousands of people in Birmingham, Bristol and York. These days with advanced technology there are much less workers needed. He also reflected on the charities that had big problems during the year. We should put real effort into supporting governments to make the Charity Commissioners more independent of any administration and entrench the independence of the Commission by the means of their funding.

Margaret Richards

Dear Editor,

On the 27th June I travelled to London to go to an ordination service at Westminster Cathedral and whilst in the underground I sat opposite a lady in what I thought at first was National dress. However I then noticed the words CWL on her costume. You can guess my interest!

I moved to sit next to her and discovered that she is a member of CWL Nigeria, but she lives in Enfield.

A young Nigerian was being ordained that day and there were a number of CWL Nigeria members there to support him. It seems that most or all of them live here in either England or London. I did not have time to find out as we arrived at Victoria station then. I had intended to go with her to the Cathedral but I unexpectedly met the young man that I was there to support. When I arrived at the Cathedral there were about twenty ladies in a similar costume together. The priest they supported is, I think, working in Enfield.

I am not sure if this lady is with Cockfosters Section but it would be good if these ladies were recognised as a group. You may already know of them but I felt it was worth contacting you. The priest they supported is Fr Cyril Chiaha.

Teresa Metcalfe

Youth Group of St Peter's Liverpool say "Thank you to CWL!"

Continued from Page 1

target could never have been possible without all the support from our parish and donations we received from wonderful organisations that have supported us through our journey. These are the Catholic Women's League, the Knights of St Columba and the Catenians. Lourdes is one of the best experiences of our lives and as young people, it is so special to take part in this pilgrimage with others as it creates a more remarkable and unique testimony.

For several of us this year was a returned visit to Lourdes, undertaken with the Liverpool Archdiocese on their Youth Pilgrimage. We started our journey on the 24th of July and finished on the 2nd of August. It involved a 26 hour coach ride with 50 others, long days and an amazing experience that they will never forget. Duties included taking pilgrims to and from their hotels, to the baths and masses. In addition many volunteered in the hospital, where it was very humbling to be working hands on with the sick pilgrims. Of particular significance was the right of passage for those who were now over 18 years old and now with joint adult responsibility for the youngsters in our group. For volunteer Amy, having this new role was rewarding as having just turned 18 years old, she could relate with the young teens and felt her role was important in bridging the gap within the group. For most youngsters, feeling a little homesick during the pilgrimage was a common feeling, especially if it was their first time away from home. Even though volunteer Charlotte had been to Lourdes twice before, she was still met with new challenges on this third trip! A big personal step was developing her communication skills in assisting pilgrims around Lourdes. Volunteer Earl, was initially worried that he would not make friends or have as much fun this time round as many who attended with him last year were not in his group. However this fear quickly was no longer a concern when he was met with lots of friendly faces and was soon rewarded with the gratitude of the pilgrims he helped. He said "I love Lourdes because the feeling you get from helping pilgrims and knowing the impact you are making by being there doesn't compare to anything else. I love the singing with other coaches and our fancy dress theme nights which always leave us feeling happy during the tiring week." Volunteer Nick said "This year was my 3rd year in Lourdes and I wondered if I would get as much out of it as I had done previously. Lourdes once again proved me wrong, it will always be a special place for me, I grew closer to the people I already knew, and to people I didn't, and also to God. I hope to return again next year as an over 18, where I'll face several new circumstances, challenges and responsibilities." Katy, another of the volunteers concluded things perfectly by saying "I love going to Lourdes because knowing the impact that me, one person, can make to someone's life in a single moment shows me that we don't have to look far for miracles." Some of our CWL members were in attendance at October's thank you mass, held at St Peter's in Liverpool.

Relief & Refugee Prayer

O Divine Master, you were once a refugee.

Have pity on millions of our fellow men, uprooted from their homes today.

Teach us so to understand and love, that they may once again know peace and joy.

I was hungry, and you gave me food; thirsty and you gave me drink. I was a stranger and you brought me home; naked and you clothed me; sick and you cared for me.



All of the
National Officers wish
you a Holy Christmas
and a Happy
New Year

National Evangelisation Conference

- Proclaim '15

Catholic Women's League (CWL)/Our Lady's Catechists (OLC)
Report from: **Rosa Vasquez OLC**
representative, Brentwood Branch

National Evangelisation Conference, Proclaim '15
Given at Birmingham on St. Benedict's Feast, 11 July 2015.

ARCHBISHOP BERNARD LONGLEY
Archbishop of Birmingham

Archbishop Longley welcomed the audience. Proclaim'15 is an initiative of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales and being coordinated by the Department for Evangelisation and Catechesis. The Conference comprises the archbishops, bishops and auxiliary bishops of the 22 dioceses within England and Wales, the Bishop of the Forces, the Apostolic Eparch of the Ukrainian Church of Great Britain, the Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham and the Apostolic Prefect of the Falkland Islands. The Department for Evangelisation and Catechesis chaired by Bishop Mark O'Toole (Plymouth). A particular focus of the Department's work is to support the 'New Evangelisation', term used by Pope St. John Paul II. Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis. We are 'called to Serve' The World and the Church have many challenges; forgiveness and reconciliation, leadership in the Catholic Church, draw people to the Church. Holy Father Ministry 'Year of Faith' Evangelii Gaudium 'The Joy of the Gospel

CARDINAL VINCENT NICHOLS
Archbishop of Westminster

The Mission to the world: Jesus said to the eleven disciples. "Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you. And look, I am with you always; yes to the end of time." (Mt. 28: 19-20).

This question was posed in December 1962 as a plan for the entire Second Vatican Council under Pope John XXIII. It was followed by this remark: 'In order to respond to the Saviour's command the whole Church must be put on a missionary footing!'

In 2015, inspired by Pope Francis, determined that this shall be so. 'Go therefore to all nations.' Why is this central order of the Lord? It is central because it is the central purpose of His Incarnation, of His life, of His death, of His resurrection, of His return to the Father. "As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world"... I pray not only for these but also for those who through their teaching will come to believe in me'. (John. 17: 18, 20). By Baptism we are made one with Christ. His mission is ours. This Mission, given to Jesus by the Father, flows through all eternity, for he is the eternal Word, through whom that gift of life is first given. And He becomes the Incarnate Word, so that the gift of life may rich its fulfilment. This is the mission of the Father's heart – the outflow of His creative love, now flowing to us, in our need, as the eternal mercy of the Father.

To understand our mission we have to go to the heart of God, the very Mystery of the Holy Trinity, the inner life of God. This is spoken as the divine 'communio' – the sharing within the mystery of the persons of God of divine life, love, truth, goodness and beauty. Only from that inner heart of God does our mission arise, does our mission find its shape, its purpose, its energy. Our mission starts and flows from prayer, from our daily openness to the

great mystery of the life of God. In recent years, since the Second Vatican Council, we have talk of the Church as a 'communio' – a communion or even as a community. This talk of the Church, or the parish, as a community, has little depth unless the word 'communio' refers first of all the life of God. The Church is a 'communio' in and through the communion of life of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Only because we have drawn, together, into that life we are a community. We are not a group of like-minded people who agree a program of action. We are participants together in the mystery of God. Parishes are not communities unless they are rooted in the 'communio' of the life of God. Nothing else will hold us together. Our striving after that sharing of life, of love, of truth, of goodness, of beauty that flows from God is the only thing that makes sense of Parish life. That is why the celebration of Mass is our central act; why do we say that the Eucharist makes the Church. This is why our life of prayer is essential; why our pondering of the Scriptures is crucial; why our gazing on Our Lord present in the Blessed Sacrament is our silent centre.

How is it that we are members of the Church, here today? Because Jesus has called us, in a thousand different ways. It is the Father's will that Jesus calls each one of us. Each of us is a gift given by the Father to His Son to be His companions, to share in His mission. We are here because it is the will of the Father to send us into the world! What next, the Pope has asked for a Jubilee Year of Mercy, beginning in December 2015. Pope Francis' favourite description for us is 'missionary disciples'. Disciples because we are focused in Christ. Missionary because we are sharing his mission. He is sending us into the world. And for this he gives us his Holy Spirit. The first is that the Holy Spirit precedes us wherever we are sent. Second. We have to remember is that in our mission the Holy Spirit will give us the gifts we need. Remember the 'Spiritual Works of Mercy' and 'The Corporal Works of Mercy.'

Cardinal Nichols read the messages sent by Pope Francis and Archbishop Justin Welby: Pope Francis' Message: Pope Francis assures Proclaim'15 delegates of his "spiritual closeness and prayers" 11/07/2015 9:15 am.

The Holy Father was pleased to be informed of the National Evangelisation Conference Proclaim'15 to be held in Birmingham on 11 July 2015. His Holiness encourages all gathered to open anew their hearts to Christ, so that they in turn may revitalise their parishes, forming each to be "a community of communities, a sanctuary where the thirsty come to drink in the midst of their journey, and a centre of constant missionary outreach" (Evangelii Gaudium 28). Commending all gathered to the intercession of Mary, Mother of the Church, Pope Francis willingly imparts his Apostolic Blessing as a pledge of peace and strength in the Lord.
Cardinal Pietro Parolin. Secretary of State.

Message from the Archbishop of Canterbury, Archbishop Justin Welby. Archbishop Welby will be at the Church of England's General Synod in York at the same time as Proclaim. We will join you in prayer for the evangelisation of this country. Be assured of my prayers for you this day; that God would empower you that you may know the height, depth, breadth and width of his love for you, and

inspired by this transforming love, you may be compelled joyfully to share this love with others, In Christ.
+Justin Cantuar

WORKSHOPS

I was given at the Brentwood Cathedral a card indicating the workshops I should attend: Prayer, Team and Experiences. There were 11 workshops in total.

PRAYER: How to make prayer your foundation of your missionary parish.

Speaker: Rt. Rev. Alan Williams sm. Bishop of Brentwood Diocese. Make a definite choice: Proclaim Christ because you know Christ. Christ is the same today, tomorrow and forever. We proclaim on the Risen Lord, Christ is with us, Christ always invite us to change. 'Jesus went up to Jerusalem where He cured a sick man at the Pool of Bethesda. Jesus asked Do you want to be well again? The man explain to Jesus that he is unable to get into the pool because of his disability which had lasted for thirty- eight years. Jesus said get up, pick up your sleeping mat and walk around'. The man was cured at once' (John5: 7-9).

Do you want to Proclaim the Gospel?. Spread the Word, do not forget Christ is with you. Prayer, Conversion, Perseverance. Go out even to those who are frightened to Evangelisation. Christ does the work. Invite your Parish to go forward to others.

Jesus Christ is free but you need of people to grow in pray. Pray for the 'Intercession of Our Lady' with all parishioners. Pray at the 'Eucharist Adoration'. 'The foundation of a Missionary Parish is Christ'.

TEAM: How to form a Parish Evangelisation team.

Speakers: Fr Paul Cannon, Episcopal Vicar for Evangelisation for the Salford Diocese. Sharon Beech is Project Development Co-ordinator for the Department for Evangelisation in Salford Diocese. They published the book: -Welcome to Witness. Becoming an Evangelising Parish - is published by Redemptorist Publications.

In March 1983 Pope John Paul II spoke of a 'New Evangelisation to Bishops of Latin America at their General Assembly' in Port –au- Prince. In 2013 'Evangelii Gaudium' Proclaim the initiatives of Bishops of England and Wales. Pope Francis asks 'go out and do it.'

We need to set up Parish Evangelisation Teams. 1. To select people –invite them personally. Try not to select those who are already overburdened. Seek out those who you feel are open to new experiences of God through others. Seek out those who are going to be good working as part of a team. 2. Seek those who have interest for Evangelii Gaudium, and read and meditate. 3. Formation; The purpose of the time of formation is that the you can work together, share ideas and have the basic understanding that the priority is to 'evangelise'. 4. Review plan: They must be of the team and resist the temptation to just 'get on with it'. The group must be realistic in setting up their goals. They must learn to utilise, encourage and resource existing groups. The team should remain in communication with the Parish clergy.

EXPERIENCES: How to offer prayer experiences as effective outreach.

Speakers: Sister Michael Lee is working in the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle as Co-ordinator of the



Diocesan Evangelisation Team – mixed team of priests and laity responsible for promoting and keeping alive evangelisation efforts in parishes, schools, and deaneries. Sister Brenda Matterson. Since 2007 she has been a member of an Evangelisation Project in Hull.

Be the hands of Christ: is a personal relationship with Christ. To pray, console those who suffer, give comfort and support in solidarity. Be the feet of Christ; bringing Good News engaging adults, and the young.

Be the voice of Christ; through the Gospel Christ continue talking to us, let us transmit The Joy of the Gospel. Be the eyes of Christ: to look with compassion see those who are in anguish, children who are suffering, the despairing people who are disfigured. Be the ears of Christ: to really listen to the homeless, the abandon, the unborn, do not refuse to listen.

Be the heart of Christ: to love the grateful, to forgive, to encourage one another.

Be the mind of Christ: to think of other people who are ill, in distress; pray for them.

I thank my God whenever I think of you, and every time I pray for you all, I always pray with joy for your partnership in the Gospel from the very first day to the present. I am quite confident that the One who began a good work in you will go on completing it until the Day of Jesus Christ comes, (Philippians 1: 3-7).

Practical ways to Evangelise: Open the Church for 30 min; try 'people speak to people as they are leaving.' Street evangelisation; during Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter. For Christmas. We celebrate the Birth of Jesus Christ. Prepare a leaflet about 'why we celebrate Christmas; 'Jesus our Saviour is born'.

Go out to people, e.g. in the shopping centre. Invite them to a Carol service in your Parish. While singing Carols take them around the Crib, make the people kneel, light a candle. At Lent you can distribute cards with a ribbon, write in the card about Jesus. At Easter look for those people who were away from the Church, invite them into the Church. You can also prepare cards that can be given to people who attend a funeral. Take them to their sit.

For Advent: go across to 'residential homes' give a special prayer card prepared for them. Read to them the Word and the Gospel of the day of your visit or of the last Sunday.

Pope Francis called us to be 'Spirit filled Evangelists'. A transformed person transforms others.

Dear CWL Members of Brentwood Diocese:

Here is a long summary of my attendance to Proclaim'15 building missionary parishes.

Please commit yourselves to take action and continue with the work Proclaim'15 started. As I had stated above a 'team of new, fresh people who can commit themselves to open their heart to others, and most of all to work as a team. There is no age limit, involve the young of and young at heart. Recommended reading as a way of preparation is Evangelii Gaudium. The Joy of the Gospel by Pope Francis. I enclose a prayer from Pope Francis.

Please let me know when you start and can send you further information. I would like to put together all the achievements you made towards evangelisation within the Brentwood Diocese.

With my best wishes
Rosa Vasqu

COMMUNITY

BRANCH NEWS



ARUNDEL AND BRIGHTON BRANCH

On the feast of Corpus Christi, members of **ARUNDEL & BRIGHTON BRANCH** gathered at Arundel Cathedral for the annual Carpet of Flowers. After Mass members took it in turn to carry the banner in the procession through the streets of Arundel to the Castle grounds for Benediction, before returning to the Cathedral for a final Benediction. This year the carpet represented the 50th Anniversary of the Diocese as well as the installation of Bishop Richard.

CWL members acted as welcomers on the day which was held in the Amex Stadium in Brighton. They were presented with bright orange t-shirts to wear.

The day began in torrential rain with over 200 coaches arriving and needing to be met, as well as trains and cars. A total of over 11,000 parishioners descended on the stadium for what proved to be a wonderful day.

A market place of stalls was set up for many different organisations where they could show-case their activities. Members of the CWL wearing blue sashes and their badges were on hand to speak to the ladies who attended. Over 60 ladies showed an interest in the League as well as groups from Parishes. All these leads are gradually being followed up.

The sun finally came out at lunchtime and at 3pm Mass was celebrated by Bishop Richard Moth accompanied by Cardinal Cormac, several Bishops, Priests and Deacons. The choir of many hundreds lead us all in a very uplifting ceremony and celebration.

Activities for all the family including a fun-fair were provided along with talks – something for everyone.

A new Section has been started in Pevensy where many ladies expressed an interest at a recruitment drive in June. The age range is mid thirties to mid eighties. The meetings are held in the evenings as a lot of the ladies work and have young families.

Bexhill Section held a talk on 'Handbags through the Ages' as well as a craft evening where they made hedgehogs from old paper-back books. Weybridge held an afternoon tea in aid of the Nepal Earthquake victims. Other Sections held coffee mornings, quizzes all to raise funds for the various charities they support.

Should you be visiting Sussex, a must see place is the Catholic Church in Goring by Sea where the ceiling has been painted as a miniature Sistine Chapel. An amazing sight!



BIRMINGHAM BRANCH

When members of **BIRMINGHAM BRANCH** were asked if anyone wanted to put on a display at St Chad's Annual Flower Festival with the theme of 'The Consecrated Life', it was suggested that all it needed was some flowers in a vase and something about the League. I thought even I could do that, so I volunteered! I had a plan - I would use the picture of St Margaret Clitherow holding her shoes as she awaited execution. The shoes would be represented by red flowers surrounded by yellowish/greenish flowers. From the League Prayer I would print out the Prayer to the Holy Spirit and ask that we may be guided in the footsteps of Our Lord and his Apostles.

I was then told that I had been allocated the main steps in front of the Altar, but it would have to be in two parts as there has to be a gap for the Priest celebrating Mass. So now one vase of flowers was not going to be enough! After discussing it with friends I had a wealth of ideas, and even though I had never used oasis before, I now had in my mind what I could do.

Starting at the top left would be a basket with the pre-planned red flowers surrounded by yellowish/ greenish flowers, with others behind to give it a bit of height. Trailing ivy would come down the steps to a tray with a red shoe, suitably adorned by with white flowers a yellowish/greenish border and reeds to spread it out. The ivy trailed down and this tray was repeated.

The ivy then went across in front of the steps and then the footsteps started climbing, this time with white shoes and red flowers. The ivy took us up to a basket at the top with white flowers representing the Holy Spirit and surrounded by red flowers plus other greenery to give it height.

The choice of flowers was really based on their colour rather than their type, size and shape, and for a first attempt at this type of thing I was rather pleased with myself, and even though I didn't win, the display representing the League was highly recommended by the judges!!

Elizabeth McDonald

Wolverhampton Section held a 'Musical Extravaganza' in June, for Let Us Play (activities for disabled/special needs children) and Street Pastors, both within Wolverhampton. West Midlands Concert Band entertained a capacity crowd in the church hall. We raised £474. Also a Parish Skittles Night, in September, for Relief and Refugee, raised £221.

At both events the tables were heaving with delicious donations of food. Generous leftovers were sent to The Little Brothers of the Good Shepherd, for the hungry.

CARDIFF BRANCH

In August, the ladies from **Cardiff Section**, along with other ladies from the parish, (plus one husband!) went to visit the old Church of St.Cadoc in Llancafarn in the Vale of Glamorgan, to see the medieval wall paintings there. We have tried to organise a visit for quite a while, and at last we made it.



Llancafarn has been a Christian site since the 6th century where it followed the monastic tradition.

A Catholic historian, Mrs Madge O'Keefe, met us nearby and we made our way into the church. The wall paintings had been covered up after the Reformation.

Conservation of these wall paintings continues. Mrs O'Keefe gave us a very interesting talk about the paintings and showed us around the church.

Then afterwards - guess what? We all went to the pub next door to the Church for lunch!

Briton Ferry Section celebrated the 50th anniversary of their parish church, Our Lady of the Assumption, by mounting a display of events over the last 50 years.

On 5th September members from **Cardiff, Swansea and Briton Ferry Sections** took part in a Retreat at the Pastoral Resource Centre, in Cardiff. Sr. Marie de Montfort SSJ led us in a thought provoking and interesting day based on 'Ways of Praying'. One of these involved showing and talking about our favourite mug. The resulting discussion was wide ranging with numerous references to prayer; using the mug metaphor it could be viewed as an indicator of thirst and need.

Sr.Marie introduced the idea of prayer using art; she based this on Seiger Koder's painting of the Last Supper. The picture is fascinating as it shows the Last Supper from Christ's perspective: all you can see of Christ are his hands and his image reflected in the cup. A lively conversation ensued on the portrayal of the faces of the apostles and the many symbols in the picture.

This prayerful day ended with Exposition and Vespers in the Chapel.

CLIFTON BRANCH



This summer all the Sections in **CLIFTON BRANCH** are putting together back packs for the Mary's Meals Back Pack project.



Each back pack contains clothing, pencils, pens, notebooks etc and they are all made up individually for a child of a particular age. An excellent way of using the rucksacks we have lurking in the cupboard but never use.

DORSET BRANCH

In July several members, along with some members from **Dorset Branch**, attended the annual Diocesan Pilgrimage to



Glastonbury. The Branch banner, with Our Lady of Glastonbury embroidered on the back, was processed, along with other diocesan banners through the streets of Glastonbury. Mass was then celebrated by the Rt. Rev. Crispian Hollis, Bishop Emeritus of Portsmouth. It was really moving to be part of the Mass in the beautiful grounds of this lovely old abbey. Members from **DORSET BRANCH** and ladies from other churches attended a quilting and patchwork demonstration at Dorchester from member Beryl King and a colleague before enjoying a cream tea. The meeting started with a short liturgy and the proceeds from the raffle, £100, was to be given to the local Women's Refuge charity. The Section outing for **Branksome** was a trip to Wareham and a tour of the Anglo-Saxon church of St Martin with its 12th century frescos and a marble effigy of Lawrence of Arabia, followed by a walk along the medieval town walls originally built to defend the town from Vikings. Joyce Coleman of Wareham Section kindly guided the visitors until they finally arrived at Nellie Crumb's tea shop for a cream tea.

EAST ANGLIA BRANCH

EAST ANGLIA BRANCH held a Spiritual Day in June, which was led by Alison Love and focused on family life and women in the Old Testament. After lunch Alison asked us to visit the local charity shops and purchase one item, which she then auctioned off at



the end of the afternoon. This caused quite a few laughs, and a bidding "war", but at the end, the money raised went to Branch funds. (Could be an idea at Section meetings to make some easy money).

During the summer the Sections had various outings including Walsingham, garden centres, Otley Hall - a beautiful Tudor Hall and gardens, lunches at a variety of venues. One Section held an afternoon tea to raise funds and another celebrated the Magna Carta with afternoon tea and a quiz. Socialising has been an important part of the summer. Congratulations to Joan and Harry Runnacles who celebrated their 65th Wedding Anniversary on 7th Oct. They were married in St. Felix Catholic Church, Felixstowe and still live in the town. Joan has been an active member of CWL for well over 50 years and still regularly attends Section and, when possible, Branch meetings. The flower arrangement by Avril Rickarby of Lowestoft was in memory of her father and all FEPOW'S and was sponsored by her Section. The subject was The Grand Old Duke of York and her dad was an RSM and had marched a few thousand men up and down hills in his time.

HEXHAM & NEWCASTLE BRANCH
On 31st August the members of **HEXHAM & NEWCASTLE BRANCH** gathered on the banks of the River Wansbeck in Morpeth to take part in a Prayer Walk. We paused and prayed at several points on the way - the footbridge, a park, "a gutter" and at the riverside itself.



One of the prayers by the water's edge was a reflection on what Pope Francis has said about WATER: "Fresh drinking water is an issue of primary importance. One particularly serious problem is the quality of water available to the poor. Every day, unsafe water results in many deaths and the spread of water-related diseases - access to safe drinkable water is a basic and universal human right, since it is essential to human survival." (Encyclical letter Laudato SI' (On care for Our Common Home))
At the end of a very prayerful walk the ladies returned to St Robert's church hall for a well earned afternoon tea and of course a good chat. Donations were given and £171 was raised towards the WUCWO resolution for the "right to have access to clean drinking water and sanitation."
On Sunday 6th September members of all Faiths, among them many CWL Members, gathered together in Durham Cathedral for Ecumenical Vespers to celebrate the final pilgrimage in the Roman Catholic "Year of Faith".

We were delighted to welcome the Anglican & Roman Catholic Metropolitans, the Archbishop of York, the Most Reverend & Right Honourable Dr John Sentamu, and Archbishop Malcolm McMahon OP, to engage in dialogue on Christ's call to evangelisation. The service was built around the 3 P's - Prayer, Peace and Poor, in the form of a public conversation between Archbishop John Sentamu and Archbishop Malcolm McMahon OP, in the context of a joyful service of prayer & praise. Prayer - We can worship together or alone; prayer is allowing us to be near God. Christ is before us, behind us and all around us. Prayer is not always a lot of words or long hours, it is the quality of prayer that matters. God does listen to us, though perhaps not always the way we would like. Peace -To pray for peace throughout the world, spread the Joy of the Gospels, and remember Peace Day. If we want peace, reach out to the poor. Poverty - Look, you who are poor, yours is the Kingdom of Heaven. We need to change our attitude to the poor. In our present society we have a different level of

poor. As the service was drawing to a close we were all given a prayer card to distribute, to proclaim the joys of the Gospels. We then processed into the Cloisters where Bishop Paul of Durham, Bishop Seamus of Hexham & Newcastle, Archbishop John Sentamu & Archbishop Malcolm McMahon gave us a final blessing.

MIDDLESBROUGH BRANCH



Congratulations to our former National President, Margaret Littlewood and her husband Roy, who celebrated their Diamond Wedding on 1st August.

PORTSMOUTH BRANCH

Fleet Section – two members went to the Union of Catholic Mothers, Portsmouth Diocese, as representatives of Portsmouth Branch CWL. It was a most enjoyable meeting. A very interesting talk was given by Father Dominic Adeiza on his new challenge. He was asked to set up an Institute to train counsellors for African Priests and Nuns who are finding the challenge of looking after Parishes in war zones or environmental disaster zones particularly challenging. Many are becoming very depressed, resorting to drugs, drink or having complete breakdowns. With the help of two years sponsorship from Missio, the courses have been set up making use of the local University in Nairobi, Kenya (within a safe and beautiful climate). The first candidates will be finishing their two year Masters Degrees (students already have a degree prior to entry). They will then go back to their parishes to counsel their Priests and Nuns. By making use of the Halls of residence costs have been kept to a minimum. However, the course still costs \$8335 per student for tuition and full board. A 6 week 'cherry picking' course is also available where the students find their own accommodation. Obviously funding is paramount so Father has been travelling and giving talks to find sponsorship. At Our Lady and St Joseph, Lymington, the CWL were responsible for three displays at their Flower Festival. They had a great many visitors and are hoping that some of them might show an interest in the CWL. The theme for Our Lady was the hymn "Star of the Sea", the main altar was "Adam and Eve" and the last one was "The life of St Margaret Clitherow".

Adam and Eve
Our Lady, Star of the Sea
On 18th August members of **Winchester Section** travelled to the Carmelite Priory at Boars Hill just outside Oxford for a 'Step Aside' day. Our day was led by Barbara, who is a Secular Carmelite and lives with her family near Oxford. She focussed on talks about various Carmelite saints, including St Therese of Avila. She also gave an account of the life of Edith Stein, who with her sister died in the gas chamber at Auschwitz in August 1942. Our trip included a visit to their beautiful Chapel and bookshop, an appetising lunch and a stroll around the grounds, from which we could see the 'dreaming spires' of



Oxford. We were surprised to learn that though they host Days for individuals, ours was the first request from a private group. The Day was such a success for us all. It was interesting, relaxed and very spiritual. I am sure they will host more.

SOUTHWARK BRANCH

In June, 51 members from **SOUTHWARK BRANCH**, accompanied by our Branch Chaplain, Fr Bryan Wells, visited Polesden Lacey, a National Trust property near Dorking in Surrey, for their annual summer outing. It was a dull day weather-wise but our greetings and joy at meeting up brightened the day. We were given a private tour of the house and a potted history of the owners, we were also told that the Duke and Duchess of York, later King George VI and Queen Elizabeth spent part of their honeymoon at Polesden Lacey and were very good friends of the owner, Mrs Greville, who with her husband were famous Edwardian Society hosts. Being June the roses were still in bloom and it was lovely to walk around the grounds and meet up with members from all the Sections represented on the outing, who were also admiring the gardens. After finding the 'pets cemetery' most of us ended up back in the tea rooms for a last cup of tea before a final look round the shop and joining the coach for the journey home. A very successful outing. **Orpington Section** have arranged to hold a Holy Hour, following their monthly Mass on 7th November, and have invited other Sections to join them. The Holy Hour is to ask for the Lord's help in resolving the refugee crisis. **Petts Wood Section** visited the Tower Lifeboat Station on the Thames. The trip was arranged by Barbara Bridle through the Petts Wood Lifeboat fundraising group. We were made very welcome and shown a short video presentation showing the many types of rescue the Tower lifeboat is called to. We

learned about the crew's training, including their medical training, and equipment and were shown the lifeboat and the reserve lifeboat. We went away full of admiration for the crew and volunteers who are on standby for the whole of their 12 hour shifts, never knowing when they might be called upon.

WESTMINSTER BRANCH

On Saturday the 22nd August, **WESTMINSTER BRANCH** went on a Pilgrimage to the (not very well known) shrine of Our Lady of Willesden, in North West London. There were about 50 ladies who attended and we were welcomed by Father Stephen Willis, Parish Priest of the church. We were joined by Father Gerard Skinner - Westminster Branch Chaplain who gave a very informative talk about the history of the shrine and led us in a very spiritual and reflective day which included confession, Mass and the Rosary said in the Shrine chapel itself. We had our packed lunches in the fairly newly built church hall, which we later discovered has problems with rising damp. We trust and hope this will be rectified by the builders, and so we will keep Father Stephen and his ongoing problems in our prayers. To celebrate our 60th anniversary, members of **Welwyn Garden City Section** made a trip to York on 23rd September to the shrine of St. Margaret Clitherow. Fr. Norbert, our parish priest, led the pilgrimage. On arrival in York we had a very sociable meal and later we went to the shrine where Fr. Norbert offered a very moving Mass. We were joined by Fr. Richard Duffield of St. Wilfred's church, York. Fr. Richard gave us a short history of St Margaret and how she came to be martyred in York on 25th March 1586 and canonised on 25th October 1970. We finished the day with Evensong in York Minster.

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The Honourable Mia Woodruff

CWL National President 1943-1949

Born in Berne in Switzerland on April 1st 1905 she was baptised Marie Immaculée Antoinette Acton and was the granddaughter of the first Lord Acton, friend of William Gladstone PM and the great granddaughter of Sir John Acton Baronet.

Their extensive Family Tree connected her to Princes and Viscounts in Europe and her English lineage went back to the fifteenth century and Thomas Acton of Aldenham in Shropshire. She used to laugh at her birth date but she was nobody's fool, as her life was to show. Mia was the eldest of 9 children having two brothers and 6 sisters. Her father, Richard, second Lord Acton, a young diplomat at the British Legation and her mother Dorothy Lyon with their children, were posted to Holland and then to Germany but just before WW1 the family was quickly evacuated, to Berne again, until they returned to Aldenham in about 1919. She had studied singing in Vienna and London but her talents were directed to nursing. With the death of her mother in 1923 followed by that of her father in 1924 the family moved to London and at the age of 19, Mia became a second mother to her eight younger siblings. She still found time improve her language skills, in French, German and Italian having learned her catechism in these three, as well as English and I suspect some Dutch.

She started working for the Red Cross in the early 1920s and each year went to Lourdes working at the hospitals there and with sick pilgrims visiting the Baths. There she met her future husband, Douglas Woodruff, a Colonial Editor for the Times. They were married in Brompton Oratory in 1933. Douglas was asked to become Editor of the Tablet in 1935 and he transformed it into a platform for the very popular and distinguished Catholic writers of the era, Hilaire Belloc, Evelyn Waugh, Grahame Greene, to name but a few.

Mia had great respect and love for her grandfather John Acton who was described as "a towering historian". She must have recalled his famous maxim "Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely" when in 1938 Germany walked into Austria, the Anschluss. The stream of refugees from Germany and Austria, led to the formation of the Catholic Refugee Committee where she devoted much time to the care of refugee children, Jewish and Catholic. She also set up the Catholic Council for Polish Welfare. Earlier in 1939 The Tablet sent Mia and her husband to Franco's Spain and then on to the coronation of Pope Pius XII in Rome. When war was declared against Germany in September 1939, Mia also took on the role of a Red Cross Commandant, controlling medical aid and running a Red Cross post during the London Blitz of 1940. About 18000 East Enders spent every night in the huge underground shelter in Stepney. She acted also as an air raid warden, sporting a regulation army issue tin helmet, all through the heaviest bombing raids of 1941. The Ministry took over the shelter in 1942 and she was out of a job. However when Italy declared war on Britain in June 1940 this had a disastrous effect on Italian families living in Britain. They were designated the "enemy within" and males between 16

and 70, resident for less than 20 years, were interned the most dangerous listed for deportation overseas. She then founded the Italian Internees Aid Committee, the direct result of the extreme anger she felt at the Government's internment policy of detention centres. She devoted much time and energy to helping their dependents, now suffering deprivations. Her horror when the Arandora Star, filled with detainees, many Italian, bound for Canada, was torpedoed, killing over 800 men, the discovery that authorities had no records of numbers on board or a full list of victims or survivors. Determined Mia to take on herself, the unenviable role of dealing with enquiries of relatives and friends- a heart-rending task; approximately 500 Italians perished. She organised through the IIAC to provide welfare aid, raising funds from friends, well-wishers and the general public. "She felt that the Italian people in England had been treated abominably and that they should not be abandoned in their hour of need", nor was she afraid to incur official displeasure in the context of wartime anti-Italianism. The darkest days of the war deepened the need for more aid and assistance and she was instrumental in co-ordinating the work of various charitable organisations and societies of all denominations. Preparations were for the time when Europe would be freed and looking for help; money saved, clothes stockpiled, her teams trained and organised to go to Europe, the moment the war ended. In 1942 she was approached by two members of the Catholic Women's League who asked her would she consider becoming their next President. Another phase of her life began as she set about organising, within the League, a new group which eventually became the CWL Relief and Refugee Committee still working within the parameters she set up, all those decades ago. At this time of her presidency she was also involved in CWLs canteens



and clubs for the troops in all the war zones in Europe and the Middle East. In 1944 the first team of her original wider Catholic Committee for Relief Abroad, the CCRA, went to the Middle East and other teams travelled, after the Liberation, to Vienna and Maastricht to provide every kind of aid.

In 1945 Mia travelled to Rome, to aid the Italians still languishing in the displaced persons camps, and the disorganised and homeless victims of war, from all over Europe. From their base in Rome, with her dynamic approach, organisational skills, optimistic good spirit and compassion she earned respect and also the close friendship of Pope Pius XII. During this refugee work a Monsignor Montini dropped by to practice his English conversation. He expressed his admiration of her organisational skills and her personal commitment. In 1947, the world war having truly ended and her brothers living mainly abroad, Aldenham Hall, where the Acton's had lived since before the Doomsday Book, was sold. It must have been a great wrench to Mia who, as a young girl, had enjoyed dances in the ballroom and lively family parties. Succeeded by Barbara Ward in 1948 as CWL President, Mia devoted her time to the International Social Services Committee and the World Union of Catholic Women's Organisations. In Holy Year 1950 she and three friends opened a club for English pilgrims to Rome, in the palazzo of the Church of San Silvestro. Monsignor Montini asked how he might help. Mia said all that was needed now was a crucifix. He sent his own silver-gilt one which she later kept in the chapel of their home. That same year she also attended the WUCWO Board meeting in Friborg. International and European Board members explored the theme "The International Field". WUCWO was rising again from the chaos that was Europe, starting from scratch, as all documentation and records had been destroyed by the Secretariat in Amsterdam, at the time of the invasion of the Netherlands. Though many members and officers were protected by this action, their Dutch Chaplain was arrested by the SS and sent to concentration camp where, sadly, he died. 1956 and Russian Communists invaded Hungary. I well remember the Hungarian students offered free places to continue their studies at my University. In the 1960s as Vice Chairman of those organising a World Refugee Year she raised £250000 for the CWL Relief and Refugee committee which was also affiliated to Caritas Internationalis; Funds that were used for European refugees, Palestinian Arabs and the influx from China. 1963, Rome again, the election of John XXIII's successor. Standing in St. Peter's Square both watched the white smoke and heard the declaration "Habemus Papa," Cardinal Montini, Paul VI-Mia's good friend. Still Editor of

the Tablet, during the Councils of Vatican II Douglas and Mia and must have had many "off the record" conversations as the English Hierarchy and communicative Cardinals enjoyed their hospitality, Mia was a very good cook. In the June 1967 News Letter of the CWL R&R Committee, she wrote of Bishop Craven, former CWL Ecclesiastical Assistant. His immense role of support and belief in the work of the R & R teams when appointed by Cardinal Hinsley, made sure that they were the official Catholic body on the Central Committee for the World Refugee campaign of 1959 and one of the fourteen beneficiaries of the large sums collected during that year which came directly to them. Funds sent to Uganda, Vietnam, 600 000 people displaced, recent victims of a 20 year war, to Macao and Hong Kong, (where CWL R&R liaised with the very active CWL membership already established there), Turkey, Italy, Bethlehem, Palestine (armed conflict in the Holy Land,) India, Nigeria, Sicily, the Middle East, refugees from disasters, natural and man-made, bringing unending requests for help.

In 1967 Douglas retired after 33 years as Editor of the Tablet. "He was credited with turning the oldest and rather stolid organ of the Catholic Church in England, into the leading Catholic weekly." His eye-sight was failing but he continued contributing, using Mia as his amanuensis, reading to him and taking dictation for his various articles. Their home, moved to in 1967, Marcham Priory, still remained a focal point for visitors from every possible level - "a logical extension of her life's work," helping people. In 1968 she was a member of a delegation to the International Council of Voluntary Agencies triennial Conference in London, Patron H.R.H. Prince Philip. The theme was "Human Needs and Social Justice".

In his opening address, Cardinal Heenan, delighted representatives from the free-world, by asking "Who is my Neighbour? -The quick answer is everyone - everyone without exception." In 1970 they were again in Rome, for the Canonisation of the 40 English Martyrs. What a wonderful moment for a past President of the Catholic Women's League; members had prayed for Blessed Margaret Clitherow's canonisation for decades, to be recognised as a Catholic Saint, wife and mother- a pattern of womanhood.

By 1976 the CWL R&R shared their office in London with CAFOD now a member of the National Disasters Committee with five other organisations sharing in the very large sums of money, raised by their combined appeals when any disaster happened. CAFOD's highly developed publicity department enabled raising donations/funds on a much larger scale. So CWL again, became the only body dealing with individual case work among refugees and still provides this invaluable service. Douglas, husband of forty five years, died in 1978. Mia's determined spirit and faith never wavered and in the 1980s, she oversaw funds to East Africa, areas stricken by drought and famine; Kampuchea, a plane to ferry supplies to refugees; Dominica, the reconstruction of homes after Hurricane David; Yugoslavia, a home for Abandoned Babies; monies which were given to Bishops, nuns and priests, actually on the spot. At the 1983 CWL National Council held in Blackpool she was presented with a spiritual bouquet on behalf of the Relief and Refugee Committee and an illuminated scroll from the Services Committee, in recognition of her long years of service.

The Honourable Mia Woodruff -was very much part of a noble tradition, combining justified Christian pride and true humility, with deep religious devotion, a leading figure in the Catholic world of her generation, a pillar of strength in her family, a friend and colleague to count on. In later years her own eyesight began to fail and often she had recourse to a wheelchair, joking about her "creeping decrepitude." She died on April 5th 1994 four days after her 89th birthday at her beloved home Marcham Priory. A Mass was held on May 7th in her honour, at Brompton Oratory, presided over by Cardinal Basil Hume. The 200 friends and relations present bore testimony to Dom Alberic's words in his sermon, that Mia Woodruff was a woman who prompted "a spontaneous love and devotion".

The Honourable Mia Woodruff, recipient of the Cross Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice, the Polonia Restituta Golden Cross of Merit, presented by Count E. Raczyński, Polish President in exile, for her work in founding the Catholic Council for Polish Welfare and Senior Dame of the Sovereign Order of the Knights of Malta, was buried next to her husband in the churchyard of the little Anglican Church in Lyford, Oxfordshire. It seems a fitting gesture that her wartime tin hat was placed in her grave.

Written by
Barbara M. Stitt.

Mary Critchley-Salmonson's Canteeners' Germany, 1944-1946

HISTORY



Dorothea Chapman (centre) in Germany, 1944

Quite out of the blue, at the beginning of May 2015 an e.mail was received from Henrietta Grant-Peterkin, whose mother (Dorothea Chapman pictured above centre) was one of Mary Critchley-Salmonson's Canteeners in Germany from 1944-1946.

Dorothea is now 101 and living in Forres Moray with her son, Major General Peter Grant-Peterkin. Henrietta had been contacted by Mary O'Kelly, our Uniform model (left), who is now 93 living in Naas, Co. Kildare and then found Frances Watson who is 96 and living in Ronda, Spain. They all worked together in Luthe near Melle Germany (see page 62 of Mary Critchley-Salmonson's Book 'From the Beaches of Normandy to Berlin August 1944 to July 1946') and are now in touch again which is absolutely wonderful. They worked in uniform under the auspices of the Council for Voluntary War Work (CVWW). Sadly, Dorothea, Mary and Frances are all now widowed.

Extract from Page 62.

'I mentioned some way back that the original staff at Ibbenburren obtained permission from 30 Corps to proceed with a Tank Unit to a shuttle camp at a place called Luthe near Melle. The canteen was under canvas, and functioned in two large tents; one was fitted up with the counter, tables and chairs and the adjoining one was adapted as an office and storeroom, the cooking being done in a smaller tent improvised for that purpose. We had a couple of D.P.'s to assist with the cooking, and the soldiers themselves were most helpful. Our four uniformed staff made a very great success of this venture: their names were Fanny Fraser, Mary O'Kelly, Frances Watson and Dorothea



Frances in August at the age of 96 years with her daughter Isabel

Chapman. They were extremely popular both with the officers and with the men. They were billeted in rooms in the village and spent the entire day in the camp, being on duty in shifts. A shuttle camp was for the demobilisation of the German Army. The Wehrmacht were demobbed there and sent by Army truck to their home districts as near to their homes as possible.'

They have all been sent copies of the book and Henrietta is reading it bit by bit to Dorothea who is registered blind with AMD and eliciting comments here and there and is much enjoying reminiscing as are Mary O'Kelly and Frances Watson. So what happened to them after the war...?

After leaving St Mary's Convent Ascot in 1932, (where her 3 sisters were also schooled) Dorothea Chapman spent some time in Paris before returning to London to study at the Royal Academy of Music. During WW2 she initially worked as a researcher at the Ministry of Information and as a member of the CWL, later volunteered to help set up mobile canteens for the troops. She was at first based in Orkney (with Fanny Fraser) but later sent to north west Europe where later in Zeven near Celle, she met her future husband Brigadier James Grant-Peterkin DSO DL.

They were married on 17th August 1946 at St James', Spanish Place, London and during the next decade they were posted to Canada, Germany, Libya, Austria, Malaya and Singapore before returning to the north of Scotland in 1956. Dorothea was widowed in 1981. She has two children: Anthony Peter, a Major General in the QOH who later served for 3 years as Serjeant-at-Arms at the House of Commons, and Henrietta who worked for many years in Italy and California and then in London before retiring to Scotland. Dorothea has one grandson, one grand-daughter and 3 great-grandchildren.

Frances (Fafi) Watson was one of 3 sisters and remembers her canteening days with great affection and her



Dorothea (centre) with her son and daughter on her 100th birthday, the Lord Lieutenant of Moray is on the left.

friends Dorothea Chapman, Mary O'Kelly and Fanny Fraser. She met Francisco Daniel Clerc de Lasalle Cabrera in London where he was learning English and studying to be a Diplomat.

The lady he was lodging with was a friend of the Watson family and Frances was asked to take care of the poor lonely Spaniard because he did not know anybody in London! They started a love story against both families' wishes and in the end they won! They married on 22nd April 1952, again at St James' Spanish Place, London and lived in Ronda, near Malaga, Spain. They had 4 children: Isabel, Francisco, Luisa, and Jaime and 4 grand-daughters and a great-grandson. Sadly, Frances was widowed last year. Her daughter Isabel who is married to a German architect but but lives, not far from Frances, in Estepona, Spain. Mary. O'Kelly is living Co. Kildare, Ireland. She is well and still driving at the age of 93 years. She has no recollection of the uniform photograph below being taken!

She also went to St Mary's Convent, Ascot and describes her Canteening days as the best - she even went horse-riding! Her only brother, Robin, was tragically killed in action at the age of 19 while serving in the Irish Guards. Mary later married Colonel Charles Clements MC 4H and is so pleased to be back in touch with her old friends. She has a sister, cousins, a god-daughter who is very good to her and a faithful rescue dog, Tina. Mary loves her garden and working in it.

They have all spoken most affectionately of their boss, Mary Critchley-Salmonson, and knew her as 'Bimba'. She was born on 23rd March 1888, the daughter of the Hon. Evelyn Henry Ellis and Alberta Mary Hardinge. She graduated as a Doctor of Medicine (MD) and married Major Denis



Mary in October in her garden

Granville Coskey Critchley-Salmonson on 3rd February 1916. They had 3 children: John Albert Miles born 16 December 1916; Denise Irene Mary born 6 November 1918 and now living in a care home in Winchester at time of writing; Peter Evelyn George born 30 December 1919. During WW1 in 1917 she was in France with the Anglo-American-French Red Cross. In WW2 she was Co-Cdr ATS 1939-41, Controller CWL Clubs, Head Organiser NW Europe 1944-46, was Mentioned in Despatches and awarded the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in 1946. After WW2, Mary was active in Clifton Branch of the CWL, being President of the Branch for some time. She died on 9th September 1971 at the age of 83.

**Written by
Bernie Townsend
Chairman Services Committee**

I would like to acknowledge with grateful thanks the help of the daughters of Dorothea Chapman and Frances Watson, and Mary Clements (O'Kelly) in compiling this.



Dorothea on her wedding day, 1946



Frances (Fafi) Watson



Mary O'Kelly

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MAY THEY REST IN PEACE

We are asked to remember in our prayers the following members who have died

Margaret Moss

Margaret Moss, who recently died at the age of 88, moved to Chelmsford from her native Newcastle in the 1950s. She married and settled in Writtle where she raised her family, Theresa (who sadly died last year), Trevor and Elizabeth.

She became well-known in the village, working at Marconi and the Co-op, and delivering a neighbour's son who arrived before the midwife! Once her children were older she looked after Father Brian O'Higgins and the priests as housekeeper at the presbytery in London Road. Even when officially retired she continued to cook for them and provide them with treats. She was honoured for her work for the Church by the Pope, who awarded her the Bene Merenti medal. She was also invited to a Buckingham Palace Garden party in recognition of her charity work. Her family, hospitality and friendships were most important to Margaret. Once she moved to

Moulsham Street her little house was a haven of friendship and laughter for her many friends. She was so popular it was often standing room only. There food and drink were always pressed on her visitors, with 'eat it all or it will go out for the birds!' Her concern for others was reflected in the organisations with which she was involved over the years, including the SVP and she helped with the catering for the CWL Summer Camps. She was a long time member of the CWL and served as Chairman and Treasurer over the years. The Section members included many of her close friends with whom she shared many holidays and much laughter.

Margaret was a loving and supportive grandmother to her five grandchildren and recent years took great delight in her ten great-grandchildren. She will be missed and remembered with great affection by many.

Jennifer Demolder



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Westminster Pilgrimage

On Saturday the 22nd August, Westminster Branch went on a Pilgrimage to the (not very well known) shrine of Our Lady of Willesden, in North West London. There were about 50 ladies who attended and we were welcomed by Father Stephen Willis, Parish Priest of the church.

We were joined by Father Gerard Skinner - Westminster Branch Chaplain who gave a very informative talk about the history of the

shrine and led us in a very spiritual and reflective day which included confession, Mass and the Rosary said in the Shrine chapel itself.

We had our packed lunches in the fairly newly built church hall, which we later discovered has problems with rising damp. We trust and hope this will be rectified by the builders and so we will keep Father Stephen and his ongoing problems in our prayers.



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Flower Festival

Our Lady and St. Ann Line in Gt. Dunmow have recently had their first ever 'flower festival' with the most amazing flower displays, arrangements, call them what you will.



The theme was 'celebrations' and we went from Harvest Festival, to First Holy Communion, from the Queens amazing years 'in office' to VE Day, from the Eucharist to Birth, from Colour to Winning the Lottery, from Christmas to the Resurrection from Marriage to the Magna Carta and as it tied in with the 'Ride and Stride' day of cycling and walking between churches in the area we had one called Ride and Stride. And most important we had an input from the children of their displays, a photograph of which took front page in our local paper and we also had a two page spread - never before have we had this publicity. Afterwards the childrens displays were taken to one of the local care homes and the residents were thrilled with them and to learn about what the children had done.

Everyone who came thoroughly enjoyed seeing these displays and the different portrayals of the individual 'celebration' depicted. Again another example of women and their virtuosity. It was hard work of course and a labour of love but we all considered it extremely worthwhile.

Veronica Cross
Chairman

Our Lady and St. Ann Line Gt. Dunmow



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2015 AGM Report from Torquay

16-18th October saw the 109th Catholic Women's League AGM which this year was held at the Riviera International Centre in Torquay where we were welcomed by the Chairman of Torbay Council, Cllr Ray Hill.



At the request of our National Secretary I agreed to provide a report on the conference. Apologies if it isn't objective but I hope it is reflective of a very thought provoking weekend.

With a full agenda including two guest speakers it was definitely going to be a busy weekend but with entertainment being provided by our Conference Organiser – Jill Sims, any concentration required would be well rewarded.

As highlighted by the National President changes to the structure of the league are being contemplated and this was the subject of much exchanges of views both during the conference, over teas, coffees and dinner tables! As these discussions continue within your sections and branches please remember our prayer 'the league unites servants in thy service on earth....'. During the AGM our regional representatives provided a report on the events and achievements of the Branches throughout the year and this was supplemented by table displays in the breakout area (pics), alongside the various committees and the CWL shop.

We were privileged to have Mrs Jean Wells of the Catholic Grandparents Association (CGA) as our first guest speaker, promoting the role that some of us are able to play in the spiritual and moral lives of our grandchildren, sharing the support that can be offered to grandparents who are estranged from their grandchildren for whatever reason, and not forgetting those of us with or without grandchildren who are able to fulfil that role in families who may not have the gift of grandparents in their lives. Further details about the Catholic Grandparents Association can be found at <http://www.catholicgrandparentsassociation.org/>. We were urged by our Spiritual Advisor the Rt Revd Peter Doyle to support them.

Our second speaker was Mrs Natalie Harris from the Plymouth Diocesan Catechetical Summer Camps. Recruitment to CWL is often at the forefront of discussions about

sustaining the league, so it was refreshing to listen about opportunities for young Catholics to learn more about their faith within a holiday atmosphere, and see videos of the young people providing feedback on the benefits of taking part in the activities provided. This particular camp was started by the Catholic Women's League and although it is now managed by the Diocese, CWL members are still at the forefront of providing support to enable the camps to take place. It was unclear how widespread these camps are across the dioceses of England and Wales but you may want to inquire within your own diocese. Perhaps the young ladies taking part are our members of the future! NB The camp was given a donation of £500 in support of their resources, part of a collection taken during the AGM weekend with the remainder of the collection going to CAFOD.

The annual conference is not complete without entertainment, and Jill Sims is always on hand to provide it. This was my fourth conference and as I sat with my reporter head on I watched regular attenders and new laugh away at the brain tingling quiz, the cabaret and finally the disco where we again had the opportunity to join together in a social setting. The final day included reports from our National President on the National Project for the coming year – Women's Refuge, and the National Pilgrimage to Westminster Cathedral on 16th July 2016. Our National Treasurer also added another knitting pattern to the fold, this one for knitted breasts. Knitted breasts are a teaching tool promoted by the Lactation Consultants for Great Britain and are used to help teach new mothers to breastfeed. My final highlight of the weekend has to be the use of Social Media. I know this isn't

for everyone but it is a form of information sharing and of communication. Last year Bishop Peter Doyle was unable to join us in person but we were able to watch a pre-recorded conversation between him and our National President. Unfortunately he was unavailable again this year as he is in attendance at the 'Synod of the Family' in Rome. However, during a break between sessions he was able to join us live via Skype, which is probably more common amongst us for talking to family and friends living in different cities or countries. If it's good enough for Bishop Peter then it must be worth a try so take that step forward and contact the Social Media Officer for help and advice.

Eagerly awaiting the 2016 AGM in Southport.

Esther Brown
Goodmayes Section, Brentwood
Vice-President Brentwood Branch,

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THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE 60TH ANNIVERSARY

The Welwyn Garden City Section of the Catholic Women's League made a trip to York on the 23rd of September to the shrine of St. Margaret Clitherow our Patron Saint. Fr. Norbert led the pilgrimage.

On arrival in York we had a very sociable meal and later we went to the shrine and Fr. Norbert offered a very moving Mass. We were joined by Fr. Richard Duffield of St. Wilfred's church, York. Fr. Richard gave us a short history of St. Margaret and how she came to be martyred in York on 25th March 1586 and canonised on 25th October 1970. We finished the day with Evensong in York Minster..

As you can see from the photographs, a thoroughly enjoyable day was had by all. Activities during the past year include: Leten lunches, Peartree fun day, School fete, Social evenings. Our members are Catichist, Eucharistic Ministers, Readers, Welcomers, Flower arrangers, Childrens Liturgy, and our younger members belong to the P.T.A.



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