

May the blessing of the Divine
Be an especially bright
benediction
Upon mothers everywhere
On your blessed day -
On Mother's Day!



The Catholic Mother

Newspaper of The Union of Catholic Mothers

Spring 2016

www.theucm.co.uk

Pope designates Walsingham Shrine as a Minor Basilica

Pope Francis has granted Minor Basilica status to England's Nazareth, the Catholic National Shrine of Our Lady at Walsingham in North Norfolk. The rare designation is given by the Holy Father to places of worship which are of particular historical significance.

The Pope's decree was announced at Walsingham, known as England's Nazareth, at the feast of the Holy Family on Sunday December 27, by Bishop Alan Hopes, the Bishop of East Anglia, including Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambs and Peterborough. The title has been granted to the Slipper Chapel, the Chapel of Reconciliation and the Domain. Making the announcement, Bishop Alan said: "The Holy See's recognition of the importance of the church in Walsingham is a recognition of the growth and witness of the Shrine over these many years since its re-establishment after its destruction during the period of the Reformation, for its constant witness to the importance of marriage and family life and its pastoral care of the tens of

thousands of pilgrims who make their journey to the Shrine every year. "It has also come at a very important moment in the life of the Shrine as it seeks to develop and refurbish its facilities in the light of the ever growing number of pilgrims, a work being led by Mgr John Armitage, the recently appointed Rector of the Shrine. "I am quite sure that this moment will bring many blessings and graces to all pilgrims in the coming years." Mgr John Armitage, Rector of the Shrine of Our Lady, said: "This is wonderful news because it represents so much of what has been happening in the Shrine for so long. It's recognition by the Holy Father of the long history of this shrine.

"It's recognition of the remarkable devotion,

particularly of the people who work here, the volunteers and all the loyal pilgrims who come from so far, for so often and from such great distances."

The Bishop of Norwich, Rt Rev Graham James, said: "In a BBC survey nine years ago Walsingham was given the accolade of being England's most spiritual place. Now the Pope has added to the honour in which Walsingham is held. Anglicans as well as Roman Catholics come to Walsingham in big numbers and the relationship between the two shrines is close and supportive. I came first to Walsingham as a pilgrim in 1971, and I hope the new status the Pope has granted Walsingham will encourage many more people to discover the spiritual treasures of England's Nazareth." The shrine dates back to the 11th century, when the Virgin

Mary appeared in a vision to the then lady of the manor, Richeldis de Faverches, who prayed that she might undertake some special work in honour of Our Lady. In answer to her prayer, the Virgin Mary led her in spirit to Nazareth, showed her the house where the Annunciation (when the Angel Gabriel told Mary she would give birth to Jesus) occurred, and asked her to build a replica in Walsingham to serve as a perpetual memorial. Minor Basilica status has only previously been awarded to three locations in Britain - Corpus Christi in Manchester, Downside Abbey in Somerset and St Chad's Cathedral in Birmingham being the others. Walsingham is the first to be given such status since 1941.

For more information visit:
<http://www.walsingham.org.uk/home>



The Slipper Chapel



Photos, copy and distribution queries for The Catholic Mother should be sent to Caroline Mills, National Media Officer, 4 Copleston Road Southway Plymouth PL6 6RR or by email to catholic.mother@yahoo.co.uk.

For further details about the Union of Catholic Mothers please contact the National Secretary, Irene Mitchell, at ucmnatsec@yahoo.co.uk.

From the National President

Dear members,

Hello and welcome,
Where did January go? As you can see this issue of the Catholic Mother is hot on the heels of the December edition. Last year we changed the publisher of The Catholic Mother to CathCom and reduced the issues from four to three, unfortunately we found the times of publication did not fit in well with the UCM year, hence the change for this year. The newspaper will be published in 2016 on 17th February, 15th June, and October 12th so they should be with your church or nominated person the following weekend. Please make a note of the dates and if your newspapers haven't arrived contact your Diocesan Media Officer as soon as possible and she will advise.



On 27th February the Diocesan Media Officers are meeting at St Chad's in Birmingham for a day of information, an exchange of ideas and an opportunity to get to know each other. This has been organised by the National Media Team who will administer the day and I will be there to pass on information about Facebook, the new Website and to meet you all.

Study Days will take place on 21st-23rd March at The Hayes Conference Centre at Swanwick in Derbyshire. This year the time is being devoted to 'Mercy' to enable us all to really embrace the Jubilee Year of Mercy initiated by Pope Francis and take this back to your diocese for everyone to share.

National Council and AGM takes place 16th-18th May also at The Hayes. Have you taken part in either Study Days or National Council? If not, why not think about it? If you are interested in either event, please contact your Diocesan Secretary who will have all the details and there is no cost to an accredited delegate. I think everyone who has ever attended either of these events has always enjoyed the opportunity to meet other members from around the country and see the bigger picture of UCM.

I'm sure you all share in our delight that The Shrine at Walsingham has been given the status of Minor Basilica. Congratulations to everyone there and also to the diocese of East Anglia. You will find this topic covered elsewhere in this issue of The Catholic Mother.

The Shrine at Walsingham has also been chosen as a venue to have a Holy Door during this Year of Mercy. As always, the Sacrament of Reconciliation will be available before the main Mass on the Tuesday. A plenary indulgence is possible with the usual conditions.

I attended the funeral of Salford Diocesan Spiritual Advisor Fr. Anthony Sudlow at Salford Cathedral on 8th January. It was a most beautiful Requiem Mass with around 60 priests from the diocese and the Cathedral was full to overflowing. I wonder what Fr Anthony would have thought of it all; I wonder if he knew how respected and loved he was – I hope so.

The Holy Season of Lent is now with us and it always seems to be at a much slower pace than Advent as it doesn't have the hustle and bustle of the lead up to Christmas. I always find it to be a very special time to spend in preparation for the great feast of Easter when we welcome the Risen Lord into our hearts.

I wish you all a fruitful Lent and a Happy Easter with many blessings surrounded by those you love.

Kindest Regards
Love and Blessings

Val

YEAR OF MERCY

The corporal works of mercy are:

Feeding the hungry
giving drink to the thirsty
clothing the naked
sheltering the homeless
visiting the sick
freeing the captive
burying the dead

and the spiritual works of mercy are:

Instructing the uninformed
giving counsel to the doubtful
dissuading sinners from sin
patiently bearing wrongs
willingly forgiving offences
comforting the afflicted
praying for the living and the dead

In this Year of Mercy, we invite you to pray for the family. Could you please share this prayer with your members and ask them to recite it the first Friday of each month or on a day that you decide? We hope to unite 5 million women in prayer.

2016 PRAYER FOR THE FAMILY:

During this Holy Year of Mercy, Lord, we pray for all families of the world and seek to bring the Gospel of mercy to each person. We pray for single mothers sacrificing to feed and clothe their children.

Guard all newborns, guide the young and their vocations. Open our eyes to see the beauty and future in our youth; give us the ears to listen to their stories. Keep them safe from all addictions and free the victims of human trafficking.

With the loving patronage of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, the Holy Family of Nazareth, the WUCWO women of hope pray that the family be a sanctuary of peace, love and faith. Amen
We thank the Regional Vice President for North America, Velma Harasen, for this invaluable contribution.

With you in prayer,

**Maria Lia Zervino, Servidora
WUCWO Secretary Genera**



CLIFTON

Jubilee Mass of Canon Tony Harding, St. John's Bath Clifton



The Diamond Jubilee Mass was a wonderful occasion, the church being packed with well-wishers celebrating the extraordinary life of Fr. Tony. The music was uplifting and the Mass full of joy for a special well-loved priest.

Several presentations were made before Fr. Harding added his own humorous words of wisdom and appreciation. Cecilia Thorley and I were privileged to be there representing the UCM. Although retired Fr. Tony is still the archivist for Clifton Diocese and has written many books on the subject. I once visited him in the office in Bristol to hand over copies of past minutes for the

archive – his enthusiasm was tangible. Many of you will recognise him as a great friend of Val James and regular pilgrim to Walsingham, travelling with Clifton Diocese UCM.

Pat Uglow, President Clifton Diocese

HALLAM

Santa's Christmas Stockings

Knitted by ladies of St. Vincent's, Sheffield Foundation, these were a very popular buy at the Annual Christmas Lunch. The proceeds went to the Bluebell Wood Hospice Fund.

Dorothy (Anderson) Media Officer Hallam



Submitting copy for next issue

The deadline for articles and photos for the next edition of the Catholic Mother is 17th April 2016

Please send copy to

Caroline Mills, National Media Officer, at
catholic.mother@yahoo.co.uk.

Thank you.

Tragedy and time of great grief

Earlier in 2015 the UCM stepped in at very short notice to assist in packing the belongings for a family who were moving. The single, disabled mother of 3 teenagers suffered a medical crisis days before they had to vacate their property in Portishead to move to Sussex. As usual, several people rallied round and worked hard to get the family away to their new home, a new start. Molly's account is of tragic events a few months later.

During July and August the UCM was involved in an unprecedented experience and undertaking.

We had the very sad and shocking news that Jenny, an ex-member who had recently moved to Sussex but was visiting Portishead for the weekend, had been killed outright while driving back to Sussex, with her son and a friend in the car. This happened on July 7th, just a few hours after a UCM member had met Jenny for coffee in the Town

Jenny was a very brave woman who was a single -parent of 3 children and had fought ill-health and disability for many years, during which time UCM had been privileged to offer support in many ways.

Tragically her son who was injured in the car accident died a few days later in hospital in Bristol.

Her remaining son and daughter were left with no parental support but two of Jenny's sisters came over from Australia to be with them. Fortunately the children have a long-standing friendship with Sister Michele, a La Sainte Union nun and long-term family friend, in Sussex.

Sister Michele liaised with us and when the decision was made to hold the funerals in St Joseph's, on August 3rd, Sr Michele asked if the UCM would arrange the reception in the Church Hall after the funerals.

This was a very difficult undertaking to plan for, partly as we had no clear funding in place. We had no idea how many people were likely to be coming from Sussex, or how many people from Portishead would stay for the Reception and had no way of knowing

what food other people would be contributing.

With many phone-calls, texts and emails we eventually worked out with Karen, a dear Portishead friend of Jenny's, what each of us would buy, remembering disposable plates etc., drinks, and basic biscuits and cake. We supplied tablecloths on the day.

Very kindly our Parish Priest Father Tom, as soon as he heard of our uncertainty about the funding, offered to underwrite whatever costs were outstanding. UCM members manned the kitchen on the day as well as arriving early to set out the tables.

The Reception went off without a hitch and an immense amount of food was contributed not only by Jenny's good friends from Sussex but also by local friends from Portishead, including non-parishioners.

The costs were met partly by UCM members and her friend Karen donating what they had bought, and also by Fr Tom giving us £20. We were asked by Sister Michele on the day about outstanding costs and were able to tell her there was no need to pass on any to Jenny's friends in Sussex.

Without the involvement of the UCM it is difficult to imagine how Jenny's funeral - reception could have been organised so well and so smoothly and with minimum anxiety for her children and friends from Sussex.

As soon as we heard of Jenny and George's tragic accident we arranged for Fr Tom to say a Mass in the Parish and sent a Mass Card and a card offering our Sympathy to Jenny's children.

For the funeral, we decorated the church benches with colourful small paper flowers which Jenny's daughter had said she would be happy for us to do and these looked attractive and bright.

Jenny was a joy and an inspiration to know. Her sudden death was a tragedy and at a time of great grief UCM members were proud to be invited to participate so closely in celebrating her life and that of her son George by assisting for her funeral in the Church she loved and had determinedly attended for many years.

Molly Atkins, St. Joseph's Clifton

LEEDS

Members for 50 years and still going

Mavis Fleming and Kathleen Clark with their 50 year membership certificates.

Both ladies are members of Our Lady of Lourdes foundation in Leeds.

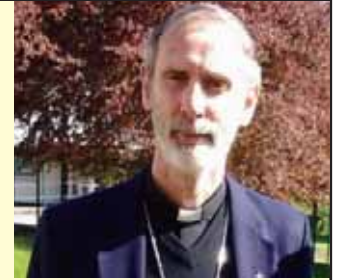


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Bishop Alan's Column



A Mother's prayers and the mercy of God

In this Year of Mercy and following last year's Synod on the Vocation and Mission of the Family we would do well to recall the story of Saint Monica and her son Saint Augustine.

Born of a Christian mother and a pagan father Augustine was brought up as a Christian but not baptized. He became an academic and to the distress of his mother, Monica, he abandoned his faith and lived with a mistress with whom he had a son.

Monica prayed for the conversion of her son and after much personal turmoil, which he describes in his Confessions, Augustine was converted and baptized at the age of 32. Before her death Monica's great faith allowed her to say, 'lay this body anywhere and take no trouble over it. One thing only do I ask of you, that you remember me at the altar of The Lord wherever you may be'.

After Monica's death, Augustine returned to North Africa where he became bishop of Hippo for the next 34 years. He never forgot his experience of the mercy of God- 'I wretch that I was... left the nest and fell down before I flew. But The Lord of mercy raised me up, that I may not be trodden down by passers by and put me in the nest again'.

However Augustine's time as a Catholic bishop was never easy. Most of North Africa was divided by a great schism. In Hippo there was another so-called 'Catholic' bishop with a bigger congregation than Augustine's. The followers of false Catholics put severe limits to the mercy of God. They taught that some sins could never be forgiven and, for example, that sacraments celebrated by clergy who had sinned were invalid.

Augustine was horrified at this alternative church that was a church without mercy. He looked to the Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15) for teaching about the mercy of God. In particular, he warned Christians never to become like the elder brother-

'If you are a promoter of peace, if you reconcile, if you rejoice at the return of your brother, if our banquet does not make you sad, you will not remain outside the house... Christ died for the ungodly'.

In the face of tremendous difficulties and at times of great discouragement Monica and Augustine persevered in faith and prayer. They witnessed to the transforming power of the grace and mercy of God.

Pope Francis has asked us to 'gaze' at mercy during this Holy Year. The world in which we live is, all too often, a world without mercy. As we read newspapers or listen to the news there is much to make us doubt that mercy and compassion are worthwhile and can really make a difference. At Saint Peter's in Rome, in our own Cathedrals and at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham we are invited to walk through a 'Holy Door', to experience a personal conversion that we might become more effective witnesses. During this Holy Year we need to become a bit more like Saint Monica and Saint Augustine; more convinced of the necessity of prayer and mercy and goodness despite the seemingly impossible situations we might meet in our families and in the world around us.

Monica is often called the Patron Saint of difficult marriages and children in trouble. Perhaps Augustine, who found his way back to Christianity and the fullness of life as a Catholic by the mercy of God, could be a Patron Saint of this Year of Mercy.

I wish all the members of the UCM and their families a happy and fruitful Year of Mercy. God bless,
Bishop Alan, sm

+Alan

Congratulations to All

95th Birthday

Bridie RYAN, Our Lady of Lourdes Foundation, Clifton Diocese

Maria LAPORTE, Hounslow Foundation Westminster Archdiocese

90th Birthday

Jessica HARDY, St. Mary's Foundation Shrewsbury Diocese



Diamond Wedding
Mavis and Patrick FLEMING, (above) Our

80th Birthday

Marie RAWSTHORNE, St Mary and St Philip Neri, Radcliffe Salford Diocese
Kath SCULLY, Clifton Diocese
Val JAMES, Past National president, Past president Clifton Diocese
Pat UGLOW, President Clifton Diocese, St Dominics Foundation, Clifton Diocese
Marge MALLOY, St Thomas of Canterbury Foundation, Birmingham Archdiocese
Ann LAMBKIN, St. Swithins Foundation, Portsmouth Diocese
Anna MORRINEAU, Exmouth Foundation, Plymouth Diocese

Lady of Lourdes Leeds Diocese
Don and Muriel NICHOLLS, Our Lady of Lourdes Foundation Clifton Diocese
Reg and Pat PAYNE, Our Lady of Lourdes Foundation Clifton Diocese

Golden Wedding

Jim and Jill O'DONNELL, (right) Selsdon Foundation Southwark Archdiocese
Andrew and Rosemary GUNN, Filey Foundation, Middlesbrough Diocese
Paul and Jackie RYAN, Our lady of Lourdes Foundation Clifton Diocese
Gary & Christine NEWPORT, Our Lady of Lourdes Foundation, Clifton Diocese

Ruby Wedding

Ann and Ian HILL, St George's Foundation Liverpool Archdiocese
Ketty and Steve DAY, (Ketty is Danish hence the unusual name), St. Patrick's Foundation Salford Diocese



MIDDLESBROUGH



True Life in God Pilgrimage

In October 2015, I went to Rome on a True Life in God pilgrimage. In 1995, Vassula Ryden, an Orthodox Christian, received messages, first from her angel Daniel and then from Christ himself. These were in the form of writings by her, but not in her own handwriting, which have become known as the messages.

Christ wants repentance from everyone, also he wants unity in the church – Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant – unity in diversity, not all the same, but united in love, and as a sign of this, Christ wants the date of Easter to be the same throughout his Church. After a few years, the message began to be published, Vassula began to travel to different countries, prayer groups were set up which included saying the Rosary and reading a random passage from the messages.

Later, retreats in different countries were organised, and every other year pilgrimages, including Egypt and the Holy Land. Next year there will be a retreat in Medjugorje, the following year a pilgrimage to Ethiopia.

I have been going to the TLIG prayer group for a few years, I decided to go to Rome to get an overview, and also because they were having visits to Assisi, Loreto and Pompeii.

So, to the pilgrimage. There were more than 650 pilgrims from 63 different countries staying in an enormous hotel on the west side of Rome, with 17 coaches to take us about. Each day we had Mass somewhere different and in a different rite, Coptic, Orthodox, Maronite and Roman Catholic. Some Masses included strange and wonderful singing. There were at least six Bishops and dozens of priests, including those from Ethiopia who have invited us to the next pilgrimage.

On Wednesday we went to the Papal Audience, and Pope Francis travelled about on his Popemobile. He gave a speech, about children needing love, which was translated for us into English. Some of the bishops spoke to Pope Francis, who is willing to work towards the unification of the date of Easter.

Everyone had transistors for the various languages, which were extremely useful particularly when on different outings it enabled the guides to communicate without everyone having to gather in groups.

Each day we had speeches from different people and a healing service, but the overall impression I got was that it is a world-wide movement towards unity, love and friendship.

Hilda Carney, President, Middlesbrough Diocese

EAST ANGLIA

Fundraising for 2015

In November, Father David Ward did a sponsored Gospel Reading and raised £1304.25, the collection was split between 'Let the Children Live' and our twin Parish in Tahen, Cambodia.

Our Fundraising for 2015 has raised £1650 and this was split between the Lifeboat service East Anglia and Father Michael Heed's Mission in Zimbabwe.

On January 9th 22 Members and their husbands attended our annual Christmas dinner at a local hotel. An enjoyable evening was had by all.
Marguerite Wayling

SHREWSBURY

Alzheimer's Coffee Morning

The Alzheimer's Society was our chosen charity for 2015. We raised £2,500 by holding a coffee morning, date, cake stall and, of course, our Garden Party. We also received some generous donations from parishioners and members and their families.

Our chosen charity for 2016 is Willow Wood Hospice which is a local Hospice caring for the people of Tameside and Glossop of which Stalybridge is party.

Pat Fleming, Shrewsbury Diocese



The people in the photograph are (from left to right looking at the picture): Marie Bardsley (Secretary), Stella Mackie (Treasurer), Pat Fleming (President), Stephanie Larkin (Alzheimer's Society), Fr Philip Atkinson (Parish Priest), Sheila White (Member) and Barbara Crossley (Member).

JERICHO

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The Jericho Society
'Mater Salvatoris'
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Renfrewshire PA10 2PY
Tel: 01505 614669
thejerichosociety@gmail.com

SALFORD

Mass in honour of St Margaret Clitherow

Catholic Womens League and Union of Catholic Mothers celebrate Mass in honour of St Margaret Clitherow, Our patron saint, at the most beautiful Cathedral of Salford.



St Sebastian's New Members

Five new members enrolled at St Sebastian's Pendleton Salford.

Submitting copy for next issue

The deadline for articles and photos for the next edition of the Catholic Mother is 17th April 2016
Please send copy to Caroline Mills, National Media Officer, at catholic.mother@yahoo.co.uk.
Thank you.

What Makes A Church A Basilica?



The word basilica is derived from a Greek term meaning "royal house." In the Catholic world, a basilica is a church building that has been accorded special privileges by the Pope. There are two kinds of basilicas. The world's four major, or papal, basilicas are St. John Lateran, St. Peter, St. Paul Outside the Walls, and St. Mary Major, all in Rome.

Minor, or lesser, basilicas are significant churches in Rome and elsewhere in the world that meet certain criteria and are given special ecclesiastical privileges. Minor basilicas are traditionally named because of their antiquity, dignity, historical value, architectural and artistic worth, and/or significance as centres of worship. A basilica must "stand out as a centre of active and pastoral liturgy," according to the 1989 Vatican document Domus Ecclesiae.

Because designation as a basilica indicates a special bond of communion with the Pope, the parish must celebrate "with particular care" the feast of the Chair of Peter on Feb. 22, the

solemnity of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul on June 29, and the anniversary of the Pope's election or his inauguration into his pastoral ministry.

More than 1,580 churches worldwide have been honoured as basilicas. As of last year, 325 basilicas had been designated in the Americas; there are now 69 in the United States.

Three physical signs indicate that a church is a lesser basilica. The first is the presence of the conopaeum — a silk canopy designed with stripes of yellow and red, traditional papal colours. The second is the tintinnabulum, or bell. It is mounted on a pole and carried processionally, along with the conopaeum, at the head of the clergy on special occasions. Third, minor basilicas have the right to display the papal symbol—crossed keys—on banners, on furnishings, and on the seal of the basilica.

In addition, the basilica's rector may wear a black mozetta, or cape, with red piping, buttons, and buttonholes in the exercise of his office.

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PLYMOUTH

Annual Christmas Parcels

Once again, this year, as in years past, the UCM Kinson in Bournemouth, get their little band of ladies to do what they do best at Christmas time.

Five members got together to wrap up the 'Special Christmas Parcels' full of goodies for the Homeless at Christmas and for those visiting the 'Soup Kitchen'!

The parcels contained many nice things that would be particularly appreciated this time of year - hats, scarves, gloves, socks, soap, toothpaste/brushes and other little goodies that would make life just that little bit more comfortable.

Some of the things were hand made by the member throughout the year, so these folk don't just get remembered at Christmas, but they are being thought off during the year as well.

Bournemouth may only be a small foundation, but these ladies show their care in abundance.

Barbara Rogers from UCM Kinson in Bournemouth

Franciscan Sisters Enjoy The South West



Five Franciscan Sisters flew into Bristol with Easyjet, but they arrived in Exmouth in a whirlwind that sped around our community and wrapped everyone in their warmth, love and tremendous joy - we were truly blessed.

During the week the Sisters stayed with our own Holy Family Sisters and enjoyed a very full timetable, meeting many parishioners and visiting the area. They joined the UCM at Mass and we all enjoyed lunch together in the hall afterwards when they told us about their work in Loreto, Bari, Rome, Albania and Assisi and delighted us with their singing.

As you can see their enthusiasm was catching and we were soon all singing and dancing together. During the afternoon we were given prayer cards and, of course, we were happy to give the sisters our UCM prayer card which they accepted with the promise that they would remember us in their prayers.

Irene Walker Media Officer Plymouth Diocese

SOUTHWARK

Pilgrimage to Lisieux in memory of Fiona

In 2013/14 our Joint President Fiona Knight wanted our UCM group to go on a pilgrimage. She talked about a visit to Lisieux, a place she had previously visited with her family. She had a special love for Saint Thérèse and wanted us to share this lovely place.

Sadly Fiona became ill with cancer in early 2014 and tragically she died in December 2014 aged 44. In her memory our UCM decided to visit Lisieux and this took place in October 2015. We left by minibus from St Bernadette's in West Kingsdown, Kent.

Lisieux is only a few hours from Calais and we stayed for 2 nights, visiting the Basilica, a magnificent edifice, the Carmel convent where Saint Thérèse was a Carmelite nun and is buried and the family home she grew up in. The whole experience was so spiritual and poignant for our group. We attended mass and said the rosary at the Basilica.

The weather was amazingly warm and we felt the presence of Fiona watching over us. A beautiful place to visit, we would recommend it to anyone.



Why did I decide to hold a coffee morning for Pancreatic Cancer UK?

Well because on 31st October 2014 I had an operation for Pancreatic Cancer and I am pleased to say that today I live a fairly normal life, taking medication, and I can continue with most activities again.

The Coffee Morning was my way of giving something back to help people less fortunate than myself and to say thank you. With the efforts of UCM members, parishioners of Holy Ghost Church, friends and traders, the sum raised was a magnificent £503.70 and a cheque for this amount has been sent to the charity.

I would like to say a big thank you to everyone for the help and support I received and particularly the prayers of the UCM family in the Plymouth Diocese.

Sheila Bennett

Exmouth Foundation (front right in the picture)



Memorable Birthdays

8th December was a special day for us in Exmouth - not only was it the beginning of the Year of Mercy and the feast of the Immaculate Conception, but it was also our UCM Parish Chaplain, Fr Robin's, 80th birthday. As was fitting, his special birthday was marked with Mass followed by coffee and cakes in the hall afterwards.

January was a month to celebrate another 80th birthday, as Anna Morriveau was 80 this month. Exmouth UCM did it in style as it coincided with our Christmas lunch.

It was good, after the hustle and bustle of Christmas-time and the endless meals and washing-up, to sit down and be waited on! As we exchanged news and enjoyed our meal, the views across the bay were bathed in sunshine and lifted everyone's spirits. What better way to start the New Year! (Anna is seen bottom left in the picture)

Irene Walker Media Officer

SALFORD

The Assumption Of Our Lady

For some years now Salford Diocese UCM have celebrated the Feast of the Assumption of Our Lady on the nearest Sunday available to us at the beautiful Schoenstatt Shrine, where many members take part in Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, Stations of the Cross, Benediction, the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Holy Mass – finishing, of course, with the usual tea and biscuits.

This feast reminds us how important His Holy Mother was to God that He bestowed on her this extraordinary and singular honour and took her to be with him for all eternity.

Just after the feast day itself the Venerable Peter Eagles returned from Bavaria and gave a very interesting and uplifting talk on the meaning of the Assumption on BBC radio (thanks BBC!!). Apparently, every year on that day, in defiance of the Lutheran north but in common with the Catholic Christianity of southern Europe, Bavaria closes its banks and shops to celebrate Mary, the Mother of Jesus and therefore the Mother of God, being taken into heaven by her divine son.

For our part we should think for a moment about the message in this to us. Fr. Eagles continued that it is surely right to honour motherhood. Every human society has done so, at all times and in all places. Yet often now in our own day and age it is taken for granted, undermined, perceived of less value than the workplace or careers. We have been quick to decry it, domesticate it and to speak disparagingly of the value of faithful maternal care.

The Assumption of Our Lady teaches us that human relationships are paramount, that enduring faithfulness is rewarded and that humility and simplicity are transformed into glory. It teaches us also that holiness is proximity to God, and, even more, that nothing can separate us from the love of God. And so he prayed:

“Lord, bless all whom you have called to the task of motherhood and bless all our relationships, that in these things we may find love, fulfilment and joy.”

Maureen Hurst
Public Service Officer



St Joseph's New Member

Jenny Rutherford was enrolled as a member of UCM at St Joseph's, Reddish, Stockport, Salford Diocese. Left to right the late Fr. Anthony Sudlow, Jenny Rutherford, Canon Morris O'Connell

LIVERPOOL



Coronation Street Visit

The Mothers of St George's, Maghull, paid a very enjoyable visit to the set of that long-running TV soap "Coronation Street". Although they showed some skill at pulling pints, not one of them was offered a part. Shame!

Madeline McDonald, Media Officer

A Holy Woman

At a recent "Harvest of our Hands" celebration at St Thomas of Canterbury Parish in aid of the Catholic Clothing Guild (which collects new garments and toiletries to make up baby layettes for mothers in difficulties) Fr Dominic mentioned strong women in the Church.

One he talked of was St Hilda whose Feast Day it was. This piqued my interest so I did a little research. She was born in the year 614 and baptised a Christian at the age of 13. When she was 33 she answered the call of Bishop Aidan of Lindisfarne and became a nun. In 657 she became the founding Abbess of Whitby Abbey which was a double monastery, that is one for both men and women (who says sex equality is a modern phenomenon?).

The Abbey quickly became a prestigious one, such that it was chosen to host the famous Synod of Whitby which established that the church in England would follow Roman rather than Celtic practice. She was described as a skilled administrator and teacher, and gained such a reputation that Kings and Princes sought her advice.

She died in November 680 at the age of 66. She was a truly remarkable woman, a very modern woman; to whom we can well pray today.

Madeline McDonald, Media Officer

UCM Meetings

In the past, Liverpool UCM has held their business meetings for Members three times a year in the evenings at the Metropolitan Cathedral in central Liverpool.

For 2016, the members have decided to hold them on a Saturday afternoon because of the difficulty found by some in getting home from the city centre in the dark. It would be interesting to know what experience other Dioceses have. She poses an interesting question – worth highlighting?

Madeline McDonald, Media Officer



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PORTSMOUTH

Angela Shows A Clean Pair Of Heels In Sponsored Santa Fun Run

Angela Murphy, UCM and CDF member took to her heels on 29th November to take part in the 5k Santa Fun Run in aid of ADS (Alzheimer Dementia Support). It was held at Dorney Lake where the 2012 rowing Olympics took place. It was an extremely blustery day with intermittent squally showers and it was all Angela could do to keep her Santa suit from taking flight from her body as she battled against the wind which came at her sideways.

The effort was all worth it as she raised £463 in sponsorship.

Elizabeth Christian, Diocesan Media Officer



Anna and Peter Pragnell receiving their Benemerenti Medals at St, Colman's Cosham

UCM member awarded the Bene Merenti Medal

One of our U.C.M. members has been honoured for her work in St Colman's parish. Along with her husband, Peter, Anna was presented during Sunday Mass with the Pope's award of the Bene Merenti Medal for their outstanding work as caretakers of the Church hall for over twenty years.

Peter has been in charge of maintenance, from dealing with and improving the electrical installation and mopping up minor floods to arranging tables and chairs in preparation for many events. As well as helping Peter with furniture arranging, Anna has been responsible for arranging bookings and in this role has been particularly helpful in finding a slot for U.C.M. events including the last Diocesan A.G.M.

While the Parish arranged a small reception after Mass with the obligatory cake and lots of admiration of the two separate medals and the presentation of a cheque for the couple, UCM had their own little celebration at one of our meetings.

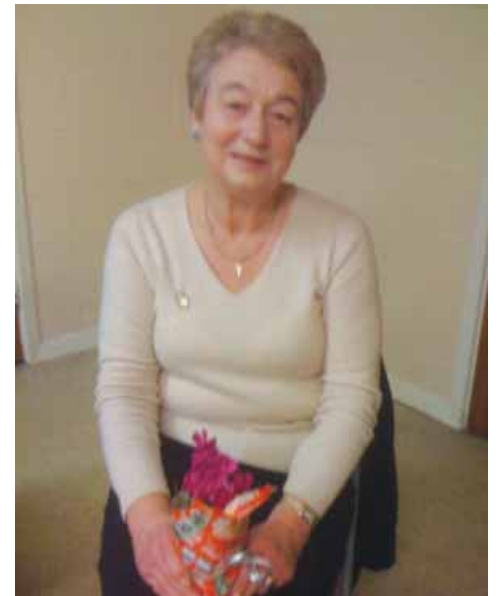
It had been decided that instead of giving an ornament of Our Lady which would gather dust on a shelf, we would give Anna a beautiful white ivory Rosary which she could keep in her pocket and which would be a reminder at all times of our appreciation of all the work she has done over the years for St Colman's Parish and in particular for our U.C.M.

Elizabeth Christian, Diocesan Media Officer

St Colman's New UCM Recruit

This is Pat Jones, our latest recruit to St Colman's U.C.M. Pat came along one day just to see what we do and obviously enjoyed herself and here she is receiving her badge.

Elizabeth Christian, Diocesan Media Officer



A Lenten Inspiration



"May mercy, peace, and love be yours in abundance" (Letter of St. Jude, verse 2)

The National Shrine of Saint Jude, Apostle and Martyr, is served by the Carmelite friars at Faversham, Kent. It is open all year.

Since its foundation in 1955, the Shrine has distributed a quarterly newsletter called **Carmelite News**. Carmelite News is a letter from the Prior Provincial updating readers on the work of the Shrine and the Carmelites in Britain. It also includes a number of reflections and novena prayers.

If you would like to receive a copy of our free newsletter, please send your contact details to: **Carmelite Friars, P.O. Box 140, Kent, ME20 7SJ, newsletter@stjudeshrine.org.uk**, or call **01795 539 214**



The Children in the Primary School. (A story read by my friend Barbara in La Croix whilst she was living in France)

A Christian Brother wanted to help the children in his primary school class to live Lent effectively. He talked to them about simple acts of penance which – he suggested – they could offer up to Jesus. They would ask him to use these for someone whom they didn't know, but He knew: someone who was far away from God.

He invited the children to bring a bean into class each day for any act of kindness or sacrifice they had done for this intention; they would put these in a jar at the foot of Jesus' cross. As Lent went on the jar filled up.

On the Wednesday before Easter, as they broke up for the holidays, the Brother thought they should have a little ceremony to bring all this to an end. So they stood around the Cross and reminded Jesus that he could use these little acts of sacrifice to help someone He knew who was far away from God.

One little boy suddenly asked what they should do with the beans. What did they think? They should throw them up to Jesus! So they went out into the playground, and the teacher threw the beans in the air, as the clock struck 3pm and set them free to run off home.

On the first day back after Easter, as he passed through the Staff Room, the Brother caught sight of a letter in the La Croix on his desk. The title of the letter was: Sit down there! He ran back to the classroom and read it out loud to his assembled class. It read:

I feel someone has been praying for me, and I want to thank them but do not know how. I write in the hope that they may read this letter.

It was the Wednesday before Easter, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. I was standing outside a church in Paris watching people going in and out. They emerged with such light steps I wondered what was going on inside. So I went in, and saw on the side of the church people going into a sort of box, one by one.

As I watched, a man in black emerged from the box, took me by the arm, walked me into a room and said: Sit down there!...Forty Years of sin – Forgiven! I, who was so far away from God! Merci! Merci!

As a result of this experience, the teacher and the children started a group who would pray to Jesus for people known only to Him, but who were far away from God. That group still exists today.

Val Ward President

CLIFTON



In December St. Joseph's welcomed two new members at an Enrolment Ceremony followed by a shared supper. Phot shows President Marie Williams Fr. Tom Dubois, Mary Templar and Rosie Waley

After 49 years my Wedding Dress still fits my granddaughter!!

Last November my 13 year old granddaughter saw a photo of me in my wedding dress and when I told her I still had it asked to see it. My husband got it down for her to see and I suddenly realised that she was the same size as I was when I made it for my wedding 49 years ago. She tried the dress on and it fitted as if it had been made for her. My son then took the attached photo of her with me

Marie Williams, St. Joseph's Foundation



'Your Mother' is Mary ...

One of my wonderful husband's little foibles is that he never refers to his mother-in-law – my mother – by her Christian name. Neither does he give her the courtesy title of 'Mum', which is sometimes used for in-laws. In fact, he always refers to her as 'Your mother'.

'When are you next seeing your mother?' he will ask. 'Is your mother feeling better now?' is another such example. Admittedly this may not seem particularly odd. However when my Mum is actually present and his method of address remains the same, I think you might appreciate how strange this can seem.

If we are sitting having a cup of tea and a chat, my husband will turn to me and say something like: 'Ask your mother if her heating is fixed now' or 'Will your mother be coming round at the end of the week? This is not to say that he

doesn't talk to her and isn't fond of her – of course he does and is - but if using her name is involved, he bizarrely always calls her 'Your mother' and addresses her through me.

Yet whatever title we choose to give them, mothers are such an integral and important part of our lives. They provide for us, nourish us and try to equip us for all that we may experience in life.

MARY'S JOURNEY

Mary, Our Blessed Lady, fully understands the true meaning of motherhood. Having been tasked with the greatest commission of all, she did not hesitate for a moment in saying 'Yes' to God and agreeing to become the mother of our Lord. And let us never forget that Mary's journey was neither simple nor straightforward.

Betrothed at a very early age, probably terrified of what her fate

would hold when she became pregnant out of wedlock and quite unsure of what carrying the Messiah could mean, she never wavered in her trust and belief in God. And this was not all. Mary grievously suffered as she witnessed her beloved son tortured and put to death by crucifixion.

MARY'S EXAMPLE

Mary is the perfect example to us all. One who intercedes on our behalf with her son Jesus, and continuously points the way to him. She is the sublime mother to each and every one of us. And so, when speaking to someone else of Our Lady, we should never be afraid to refer to her as 'Your Mother'. As Christians we have several titles for Mary, but none so accurate or fitting as our Mother...

by Julia Beacroft©

Easter Poem

If I had sat there with The Lord
In the garden of Gethsemane
If I had watched Him writhe in pain
Heard Him call His Father's name
Saw Him sweat the blood and tears
Would my soul be filled with fears

It should, it should,
But wretched sin
Still carries me away from Him.

If I had walked along the way
And saw the soldiers strike His face
Whipping Him with satisfaction
Encouraged by the crowds reaction
Would I have stopped to silently stare
Would my soul be filled with fear

It should, it should,
But wretched sin
Still carries me away from Him.

If I had watched the hammers bold
Bang against the steel so cold
Watched them nail my Sacred Lord
To the cross for all of us
Saw them place the crown of thorns
On that Head so bloodied and torn
Would I have shed so many tears
Would I still be filled with fears

I should, I should,
But wretched sin
Still carries me away from Him.

My Lord, My Lord, with every sin
I crucify You once again
Then deep sorrow engulfs my soul
Till I repent and am consoled.
Your mercy is forever boundless
The love You give forever endless,

On Easter Day
You set me free
My heart and soul
Belong to Thee.

Kathleen Kelly
St. Luke's Foundation,
Irlams o' th Height.
Salford

Dates for Diary

Media Officers Study Day
St Chad's Cathedral, Birmingham
27 February 2016

National Study Days
Swanwick, Derbyshire
2016: 21–23 March
2017: 22–24 March
2018: 19–21 March

National Council
16-18 May 2016, Swanwick, Derbyshire
Liverpool hosting, Bishop Tom Williams will attend on 17th May.

71st Walsingham Pilgrimage
4-5 July 2016
Form on page 16

MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
FOR THE 50th WORLD COMMUNICATIONS DAY

Communication and Mercy: A Fruitful Encounter

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The Holy Year of Mercy invites all of us to reflect on the relationship between communication and mercy. The Church, in union with Christ, the living incarnation of the Father of Mercies, is called to practise mercy as the distinctive trait of all that she is and does. What we say and how we say it, our every word and gesture, ought to express God's compassion, tenderness and forgiveness for all. Love, by its nature, is communication; it leads to openness and sharing. If our hearts and actions are inspired by charity, by divine love, then our communication will be touched by God's own power.

As sons and daughters of God, we are called to communicate with everyone, without exception. In a particular way, the Church's words and actions are all meant to convey mercy, to touch people's hearts and to sustain them on their journey to that fullness of life which Jesus Christ was sent by the Father to bring to all. This means that we ourselves must be willing to accept the warmth of Mother Church and to share that warmth with others, so that Jesus may be known and loved. That warmth is what gives substance to the word of faith; by our preaching and witness, it ignites the "spark" which gives them life.

Communication has the power to build bridges, to enable encounter and inclusion, and thus to enrich society. How beautiful it is when people select their words and actions with care, in the effort to avoid misunderstandings, to heal wounded memories and to build peace and harmony. Words can build bridges between individuals and within families, social groups and peoples. This is possible both in the material world and the digital world. Our words and actions should be such as to help us all escape the vicious circles of condemnation and vengeance which continue to ensnare individuals and nations, encouraging expressions of hatred. The words of Christians ought to be a constant encouragement to communion and, even in those cases where they must firmly condemn evil, they should never try to rupture relationships and communication.

For this reason, I would like to invite all people of good will to rediscover the power of mercy to heal wounded relationships and to restore peace and harmony to families and communities. All of us know how many ways

ancient wounds and lingering resentments can entrap individuals and stand in the way of communication and reconciliation. The same holds true for relationships between peoples. In every case, mercy is able to create a new kind of speech and dialogue. Shakespeare put it eloquently when he said: "The quality of mercy is not strained. It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven upon the place beneath. It is twice blessed: it blesseth him that gives and him that takes" (The Merchant of Venice, Act IV, Scene I).

Our political and diplomatic language would do well to be inspired by mercy, which never loses hope. I ask those with institutional and political responsibility, and those charged with forming public opinion, to remain especially attentive to the way they speak of those who think or act differently or those who may have made mistakes. It is easy to yield to the temptation to exploit such situations to stoke the flames of mistrust, fear and hatred. Instead, courage is needed to guide people towards processes of reconciliation. It is precisely such positive and creative boldness which offers real solutions to ancient conflicts and the opportunity to build lasting peace. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God" (Mt 5:7-9)

How I wish that our own way of communicating, as well as our service as pastors of the Church, may never suggest a prideful and triumphant superiority over an enemy, or demean those whom the world considers lost and easily discarded. Mercy can help mitigate life's troubles and offer warmth to those who have known only the coldness of judgment. May our way of communicating help to overcome the mindset that neatly separates sinners from the righteous. We can and we must judge situations of sin – such as violence, corruption and exploitation – but we may not judge individuals, since only God can see into the depths of their hearts. It is our task to admonish those who err and to denounce the evil and injustice of certain ways of acting, for the sake of setting victims free and raising up those who have fallen. The Gospel of John tells us that "the truth will make you free" (Jn 8:32). The truth is ultimately Christ himself, whose gentle mercy is the yardstick for measuring the way we proclaim the truth and condemn injustice. Our primary task is to uphold the truth with love (cf. Eph 4:15). Only words spoken with love and accompanied by meekness and mercy can touch our sinful hearts. Harsh and moralistic words and actions risk further alienating those whom we wish to lead to conversion and freedom, reinforcing their sense of rejection and defensiveness.

Some feel that a vision of society rooted in mercy is hopelessly idealistic or excessively indulgent. But let us try and recall our first experience of relationships, within our families. Our parents loved us and valued us for who we are more than for our abilities and achievements. Parents naturally want the best



for their children, but that love is never dependent on their meeting certain conditions. The family home is one place where we are always welcome (cf. Lk 15:11-32). I would like to encourage everyone to see society not as a forum where strangers compete and try to come out on top, but above all as a home or a family, where the door is always open and where everyone feels welcome.

For this to happen, we must first listen. Communicating means sharing, and sharing demands listening and acceptance. Listening is much more than simply hearing. Hearing is about receiving information, while listening is about communication, and calls for closeness. Listening allows us to get things right, and not simply to be passive onlookers, users or consumers. Listening also means being able to share questions and doubts, to journey side by side, to banish all claims to absolute power and to put our abilities and gifts at the service of the common good.

Listening is never easy. Many times it is easier to play deaf. Listening means paying attention, wanting to understand, to value, to respect and to ponder what the other person says. It involves a sort of martyrdom or self-sacrifice, as we try to imitate Moses before the burning bush: we have to remove our sandals when standing on the "holy ground" of our encounter with the one who speaks to me (cf. Ex 3:5). Knowing how to listen is an immense grace, it is a gift which we need to ask for and then make every effort to practice.

Emails, text messages, social networks and chats can also be fully human forms of communication. It is not technology which determines whether or not communication is authentic, but rather the human heart and our

capacity to use wisely the means at our disposal. Social networks can facilitate relationships and promote the good of society, but they can also lead to further polarization and division between individuals and groups. The digital world is a public square, a meeting-place where we can either encourage or demean one another, engage in a meaningful discussion or unfair attacks. I pray that this Jubilee Year, lived in mercy, "may open us to even more fervent dialogue so that we might know and understand one another better; and that it may eliminate every form of closed-mindedness and disrespect, and drive out every form of violence and discrimination" (Misericordiae Vultus, 23). The internet can help us to be better citizens. Access to digital networks entails a responsibility for our neighbour whom we do not see but who is nonetheless real and has a dignity which must be respected. The internet can be used wisely to build a society which is healthy and open to sharing.

Communication, wherever and however it takes place, has opened up broader horizons for many people. This is a gift of God which involves a great responsibility. I like to refer to this power of communication as "closeness". The encounter between communication and mercy will be fruitful to the degree that it generates a closeness which cares, comforts, heals, accompanies and celebrates. In a broken, fragmented and polarized world, to communicate with mercy means to help create a healthy, free and fraternal closeness between the children of God and all our brothers and sisters in the one human family.

From the Vatican, 24 January 2016

Francis

Whinfield Charitable Trust

Mark the Holy Year of Mercy
by visiting the campaigns on our website



Harare Cancer Clinic



Kosovo Landmine Victims

at

<http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/charities/whinfieldcharitabletrust>

Brushstrokes

We first became aware of Brushstrokes five years ago when one of our members worked for nPower. NPower employees were asked to donate an Easter egg with the total donated then matched by the company. The charity chosen was Brushstrokes that was run by Sister Margaret at St Philips in Smethwick. St. Philips happens to be our neighbouring parish about 3 miles up the road so we donated 150 Easter eggs.

Sr Margaret came to talk to our foundation later that year and explained the work that they were doing and that the Easter eggs had afforded her a way to bring Christ into the lives of these poor marginalised people. Since then we collect Easter eggs every year and also donations from our annual harvest festival. We now have our primary school (St Francis Xavier Oldbury) involved and the response is overwhelming twice a year. We also collect and donate curtains, bedding, clothing footwear etc.

Sr Margaret has now moved on to set up the St Chads Sanctuary which does a similar job in Birmingham city centre right behind St Chad's Cathedral.

Sarah Lockett

She added: "We also offer English as a Second Language for Health. Not only do students learn how to make a doctor's appointment, they also build up the confidence and the vocabulary to be able to attend appointments by themselves."

The men and women walking through the doors of Brushstrokes all speak of their desire to contribute to the local community. They want to be able to speak English and to integrate well into the local society.

One lady who had to escape Pakistan because her husband was in politics and their lives were no longer safe said: "I don't want to be a useless person - I want to use my qualities and skills to contribute to England's life."

Students come to learn of 'Brushstrokes' English classes, through social services; word of mouth, the asylum seekers information pack and numerous other routes.

Brushstrokes is a partnership community project set up in 1999 by the parish church of St Philip Neri, the Infant Jesus Sisters and Father Hudson's Society (Social Care Agency of the Birmingham Roman Catholic Archdiocese). It is based in Smethwick, Sandwell and it works across Birmingham and the Black Country.



Brushstrokes, a Birmingham based Catholic charity is desperately appealing for more volunteer English teachers and more space to help run its free English as a Second Language (ESOL) programme.

Students from over 120 different countries are crying out for the lessons. Brushstrokes Manager, Teresa Clements says: "The need is overwhelming. If we had more volunteers we could do so much more. Our waiting lists are just getting longer and longer. The space is limited and the demand huge. We are trying to offer back to back classes. A large number of our students come from Kurdistan, Sudan and Albania and they are really desperate to learn."

For more information

Teresa Clements Brushstrokes, Project Manager

t: 0121 565 2234

e. teresa@brushstrokessandwell.org.uk

Brushstrokes:

<http://www.brushstrokessandwell.org.uk/>

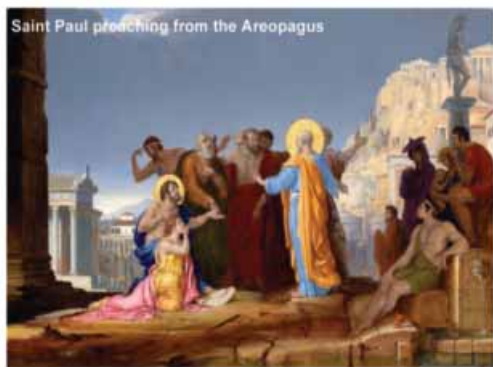
Listen to audio from the English language students:

<http://www.catholicnews.org.uk/Home/News/Language-Classes>

THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S PILGRIMAGE TO GREECE, SEPTEMBER 2017

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF SAINT PAUL

Please note all details are to be confirmed. The exact cost cannot be determined until closer to the date of the pilgrimage.



- Return flights from either Manchester or London to Athens
- Airport departure taxes and carrier charges
- Checked baggage on airline (1 pieces / 20 kg weight)
- Return transfers from destination airport to the hotel with escort assistance
- Provision of a private air-conditioned coach throughout
- 5 nights' accommodation on a half board basis at the Hotel Candia, Athens
- 1 nights' accommodation on a half board basis at the Hotel Kosta Famissi, Kalambaka
- Porterage at Hotel Kosta Famissi
- Lunch during the Saronic Gulf cruise
- English speaking guide provision for all excursions

There will be excursions to Ancient Corinth, the Byzantine & Christian Museum, Acropolis, Zeus Temple and Agora in Athens, Meteora monasteries and finish with a restful cruise from Athens to the Saronic Gulf - Hydra, Poros and Aegina.

Approximate Tour Price per person	£789.00
Anticipated deposit but do not send, only pre-registration is available at this time	£250.00
Single Room Supplement	£ 84.00
Travel Insurance (premium valid for all policies issued prior to 31 December 2016 and payable with deposit please)	£ 35.00

Please contact the National Secretary, Mrs Irene Mitchell, to register your interest ucmnatsec@yahoo.co.uk

National Opportunity THE NATIONAL MEDIA OFFICER

The duties of the Media Officer include:

- Attends National Committee Meetings.
- Attends National Council & Annual General Meeting and Diocesan Officers Meeting.
- Attendance at the Annual Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham is appreciated.
- Advises the Media of UCM events that are to take place.
- Attends conferences and meetings of other organisations to promote The UCM and also to gather information.
- Must have access to a computer and good computer skills.
- Administrator for Facebook and the UCM Website; she is responsible for maintaining and updating the UCM Website.
- Responsible for overseeing the production of the newspaper; meets with the National President to decide on the final content for each edition of the newspaper and to proof read prior to printing; liaises closely with CathCom, the publisher of the newspaper.
- She is the link with Diocesan Media Officers and she organises Training Days for these Officers.
- She is responsible for updating the list of Foundation contacts and liaising with the National Treasurer.



For more detailed information in relation to the advertised post please contact the National Secretary email: ucmnatsec@yahoo.co.uk

All nomination/recommendation must be seconded and sent together with a copy of the candidate's CV

To the National Secretary: Mrs Irene Mitchell
No later than 15th April 2016

WESTMINSTER

New foundation in Westminster

A new Foundation was established in Our Lady Queen of Apostles Church in Heston, West London in March 2015. 12 members were presented with their UCM medals on this occasion. Fr. Robert Ehileme PP was chief celebrant on the day. It was his persistent encouragement and support that the group came to fruition.

Marie McDermott writes "we are a small group but continue to attract new members. We hold a meeting every month following the 9.30 mass on Sundays and we have also have started a Rosary group every 3rd Sunday following the family Mass. We have also organised an annual family Christmas carol service.

In the photo is Fr Robert. Marie McDermott President and Birgitta Johnston Secretary. Joining us on the day was Sr. Bridget Collins, Westminster Recruitment Officer, Mary Wardle Westminster President, Iona De Souza President Hounslow Foundation and Joan Deegan, President Whitton Foundation. The Westminster Welfare Officer Norrie Fox is also pictured.

Mary Wardle

West Drayton
UCM celebrations

UCM West Drayton celebrated two events on Sunday 18th October. First, during the parish Mass at 11 o'clock, an enrolment ceremony was led by Parish President Laura Coady during which two new members, Helen Finn and Michele McIntyre, were enrolled. The new members were welcomed by a round of applause from the parishioners and with warm hugs from their UCM friends.

Later that afternoon many of the UCM members celebrated the 100th birthday of their eldest member, Barbara Paice, alongside her family and the Deputy Mayor of London Borough of Hillingdon. She was delighted to be surrounded by so many loved ones and she didn't stop smiling.

Tina Fletcher Media Officer
Westminster

Will you be walking or shopping?

Thanks to Deidre Morris for this reflection on Good Friday

Good Friday has always meant going to what was, in the old days, "The Three Hour Service". To a young child in a packed church, often with no seat available, it seemed interminable and yet it was such a part of our Lenten observance that we would miss it on pain of severe retribution (whether from God or our parents was never made clear). In more recent times, I became aware of the walk in our local town around mid-day on a Good Friday. That was fine by me as long as I didn't have to get involved. I felt a little uncomfortable about walking round the town following a chap carrying a large wooden Cross. Eventually, though, I found myself joining in and not only was it not embarrassing, it was quite uplifting. It was a way of joining Christians from other denominations in making a public statement about our faith. In this day and age when everyone is busy running around, there is something very moving about a crowd of people walking slowly in silence around the town, stopping a few times and gently saying a few prayers to remember the whole meaning of the Crucifixion.

Last year about seventy people gathered together and members from each denomination took it in turns to carry the Cross between seven pre-arranged stations and each denomination took a turn to lead the readings and prayers. It is a lot easier to slip into church for a service than to walk around the streets in silence and then pray in the open air, but in some ways it feels closer to the reality of Good Friday than any other experience. Afterwards we were invited to a cup of coffee and perhaps a hot cross bun as a way of cementing further friendships amongst fellow Christians. This brings to mind the gathering of beleaguered Christians in the early church and possibly in parts of the world today.

Gathering outside the supermarket as everyone is scurrying in with their trolleys is a quite odd experience. If you meet a non church going friend as I did, do you admit that you are just about to join the crowd, standing with all the clergy and the big Cross, or do you pretend you are just popping into the shop too? It can be a test of faith if nothing else. There is something rather special about affirming one's commitment to Christ in front of the world and in the company of our fellow Christians. It certainly helps to highlight our similarities rather than our differences which, in itself is surely no bad thing.

International Report

Nearly 800,000 refugees and migrants risked their lives to cross the Mediterranean Sea into Europe in the first ten months of 2015, according to the United Nations - nearly four times the number recorded for the whole of last year. More than 3,400 people have died while making the dangerous crossing.

The increased number of refugees and migrants seeking a new life in Europe is largely a consequence of humanitarian crises around the world. Many of the refugees are able to carry little more than the clothes they are wearing on their journeys. With European governments struggling to provide adequate support, tens of thousands of people every day are in need of food, shelter, warm clothes, and safe water and sanitation. As temperatures plummet over winter, conditions are likely to deteriorate rapidly.

How is CAFOD responding to the crisis in Europe?

Sister agencies in the Caritas network are providing aid to refugees in almost every country in Europe. They are directly supporting Caritas Greece and Caritas Serbia, who are providing food, water, shelter and emergency supplies like raincoats and sleeping-bags to thousands of refugees every day. The governments of both countries are struggling to cope with the crisis. On 4 September, CAFOD launched a campaign calling on the UK government to do more to help vulnerable refugees resettle in the UK as quickly as possible. Within a week more than 2,000 Catholics in England and Wales had emailed the Prime Minister calling for action.

CAFOD's mandate from the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales is to support poor communities overseas. CSAN (the Catholic Social Action Network) is the social action arm of the Catholic Church for work in England and Wales. Their members support refugees who have already arrived in the UK, and they do advocacy work on poverty in the UK. Together, CAFOD and CSAN form Caritas England and Wales.

How is CAFOD responding to the crisis in Syria?

They are supporting Church partners in Syria, who are providing food parcels, medical aid and relief supplies and helping people to find safe places to stay, in areas held by both government and opposition forces. The extensive community networks of the Church, even as a minority faith, mean that it is well placed to provide aid in some of the worst hit and most inaccessible areas of the country. "We recognise that we can all contribute and play a part in helping to support the most vulnerable of refugees. Such assistance includes: Prayer; Financial support; Time and professional skills (e.g. language teaching, legal help, advocacy); Shelter and accommodation. On 4 November, Cardinal Vincent Nichols criticised the government's response to the crisis. He said: "Progress is slow, but the plight of refugees cannot wait. People's generosity, in my view, far outstrips the response of our government."

"We can all be attentive to those who are vulnerable and newly arrived in our local communities and parishes. A warm welcome can be the most simple yet effective of gifts we can all offer."

CAFOD is also working with Caritas partners in Lebanon, Turkey and Jordan to ensure that newly arrived refugees have food, medical support, clothes and safe places to stay. And they are working in Iraq to help their Church partners to respond to the urgent needs of families forced from their homes. Thousands of people have been supported with immediate food, essential household goods, alternative housing, sanitation facilities, and psychosocial support to both children and adults. Find out more about the Syria crisis by going to the CAFOD website. www.cafod.org.uk

What can we do to Help?

Please join others in praying for refugees facing exploitation around the world.

Find out more about the crisis - use CAFOD resources for children and young people.

Help your local diocese support refugees.

Offer shelter, time and skills to support refugees through one of the organisations listed by the Catholic Bishops' Conference.

Progressio

On 2nd November Progressio celebrated 75 years work alongside poor and marginalised communities. After the AGM, which reported the continued growth of Progressio, (formerly the Catholic Institute for International Relations), since the 1940s, around 200 supporters gathered at Temple Church to enjoy an ecumenical choral service led by their President Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor. The Cardinal spoke warmly about Progressio's values and history, and encouraged everyone to "renew their commitment to working in solidarity with others, rather than in narrowed self-interest."

Temple Church was a fitting venue for Progressio's celebration with its close links to the Magna Carta and to the early foundation of democracy, justice and respect for every human being. To align with this, Progressio's work alongside partner organisations and faith-leaders in Zimbabwe, Somaliland and Yemen has enabled people to play their proper part in the social and political life of their own country. Quoting from the gospel, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled" (Matthew 5:6), the Cardinal's homily placed strong emphasis on the power that each individual member of the congregation has to bring about change. He said, "We in our country have the privilege of some comfort, some love, some power, and some peace. It seems to me that it is all the more important that each of us can work on that inner change and identify ourselves in different ways with those who are on the periphery, who have no privileges and often have no way to tackle the injustices and the poverty at home." Later in his homily, the Cardinal described Pope Francis as "a breath of fresh air" and used the Pope's 2013 visit to welcome African refugees fleeing poverty and conflict into Lampedusa, to demonstrate our human responsibility to use simple, kind acts to comfort complete strangers who are suffering.

The Cardinal also referred to his personal experiences overseas in order to highlight the importance of Progressio's HIV/AIDS education projects in Southern Africa, and relayed the words of one female aid worker he had met in Zimbabwe. She said, "It's very tragic here. People come to get [anti-retroviral] drugs, which enables people diagnosed with AIDS to continue to live. But when people come many are seriously undernourished, so the drugs don't work and they slowly die. All that we can offer them is love."

The evening was a great success with many fond memories of Progressio's history being shared amongst its supporters. Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor concluded by encouraging support for Progressio's work so that it may flourish long in the future, and asked people to remember that "There can be no peace without true justice for all."

Women's World Day of Prayer

The service for 2016 has been written by the Christian women of Cuba. No sooner had the UK organising committee worked through the materials for the service than they heard the news that the USA and Cuba declared that hostilities between the two countries were to cease. Talks have been taking place to lift the embargo, Cuba is indeed in a time of change! The title of the 2016 service is "Receive children, receive me." Information can be obtained from www.wwdp.org.uk. Prayers can also be found on the website in response to worldwide emergency situations.

WUCWO

As we near the time when world leaders meet to discuss the important topic of "Climate Change" I am reminded of the International



Conference in Rome entitled "Women and the post 2015 development agenda, the challenges of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)" to which I was invited as the UCM WUCWO representative. You may ask what has this to do with us. Perhaps Pope Francis' message to the attendees will explain.

"I encourage you who are engaged in the dignity of women and promoting their rights, to allow yourselves to be constantly guided by the spirit of humanity and compassion in the service of your neighbour. May your work be marked first and foremost by professional competence, without self-interest or superficial activism, but with generous dedication. In this way you will manifest the countless God-given gifts which women have to offer, encouraging others to promote sensitivity, understanding and dialogue

in settling conflicts, big and small, in healing wounds, in sustaining life at every level of society and in embodying the mercy and tenderness which bring reconciliation and unity to our world. All this is part of that "feminine genius" of which our society stands in such great need".

Over 100 women participated in the 3 day event which was organised by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace. Although progress has been made in certain areas the world has not been successful in attaining the 8 Millennium Development Goals (MDGS) which were set at the beginning of this century to be achieved by 2030. In September the United Nations elaborated a new post 2015 development agenda which now has 17 goals, 169 targets with more than 400 indicators. All of them have relevant implications for women. The women who gathered in Rome shared their views on the SDGs and targets and at the end of the very fruitful discussions a document containing our comments and suggestions was produced and presented to the Holy See "for its activity in the international fora". The text of the final reflections was delivered into the hands of the Holy Father on 10th June 2015. For more information go to www.iustitiae.org

The document should be very helpful to the Holy See, not only because of the excellence of the analysis itself, but also because it came from the combined wisdom of a broad range of powerful and respected international women leaders. There are those who say that the Holy See is not "qualified" to speak on women's issues because they are male. But we can testify to the fact that the contents of this document was produced by 100 key international women leaders. I was there to represent the voice of "ordinary" mothers concerned about their families and was heartened to see some of my comments included in the final documents. Visit www.wucwo.org,

Maureen Meatcher, International Officer

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Obituaries

Kathleen Plumb

Kath was President of the U.C.M. at St Wilfrid's Northwich, Shrewsbury at the turn of the century. Her faith was of immense importance to her and this was apparent and reflected in her day to day living. She was available for any charitable cause and was so supported wholeheartedly, in this area, by her husband Peter. Her gentle nature was evident to all. Apart from welcoming people to Mass on Sunday morning Kath was also a Eucharistic Minister and worked diligently once a week cleaning the church. Both Kath and Peter loved to go to Walsingham every year thought in latter years Kath's rheumatoid arthritis dictated what she could do physically. She was at the point of completing her three years as Diocesan President when she, so sadly died.

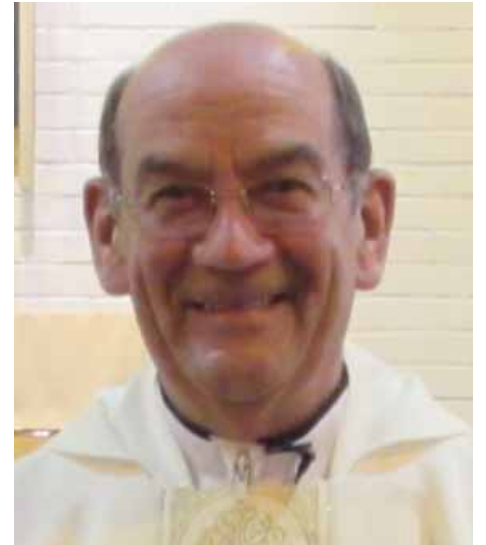
Regards Linda Morris (Media Officer)

Father Anthony Sudlow

It was a great shock to hear of the sudden death of Father Anthony Sudlow, who died on Thursday, 17th December at St Sebastian's Pendleton. Father Sudlow was spiritual adviser to UCM, Salford Diocese and will be greatly missed; he was in his seventy fifth year, the sixth year of his Sacred Priesthood. May he rest in peace. Anthony was born on 14th June 1941, and grew up in the parish of Corpus Christi, Miles Platting, Manchester; he was educated at Corpus Christi Primary school and Xaverian College, Manchester. Anthony pursued a career in banking, marrying Marie McCormack in June 1966 at Corpus Christi, Miles Platting. After the death of his wife, Anthony spent some time in formation with the Canons Regular of Premontre, being accepted as an ecclesiastical student for the Diocese of Salford in 2008, continuing his studies at the Beda College, Rome. Father Anthony Sudlow was ordained to the Sacred Priesthood at St Patrick's, Collyhurst, Manchester, on 26th June 2010

by the Right Reverend Terence Brain, Bishop of Salford. Father Anthony Sudlow served the Diocese in the following appointments: Assistant Priest: July 2010 Cathedral Church of St John the Evangelist, and St Joseph, Ordsall. Parish Priest: June 2014 St Sebastian, Pendleton with St Boniface, Lower Broughton.

Margaret Postill Media Officer Salford Diocese



Report on AGM for The Catholic Union of Great Britain

The Catholic Union (CU) was founded in 1870, has been since then a consistent voice of the catholic laity in Great Britain, striving to promote the common good in public life. Working with both the hierarchy and Members of Houses of Parliament to ensure that catholic viewpoint is heard and understood. Their patron saint is St. Thomas Moore.

During the year CU members, along with other organisations, lobbied Members of Parliament to oppose the Assisted Dying Bill. By contacting and speaking to over 100 MP's, some of whom were inclined to vote for this bill, but on hearing numerous experiences, expressed by other mainly catholic MP's, they were moved to vote against it, ensuring a victory, even though a marginal one in that the bill did not go through.

A report from Dr Tony Cole, Chairman, of Public Affairs Committee of Catholic Union, was given. He advised that not passing this Bill should strengthen our resolve that care, not killing, is the truly compassionate option. This group have and will be coordinating their efforts with other professional and social bodies to protecting the innocent and arguing for better palliative care in Great Britain.

In February, The Catholic Union Charitable Trust (CUCT) was set up; it is already helping with non-lobbying activities so that the Catholic Union will have a stronger and louder voice when representing Catholics in Great Britain, this will be done by publicity and fundraising. To date they have received £80,000.00 through donations, standing orders, and Gift Aid, based on these amounts.

At present the CU are involved in recruitment of new members. In September letters were sent to 60 Catholic MPs offering honorary membership. In 2016 an outreach programme to the Catholic student community, going through the Catholic Chaplaincy, offered complimentary membership to anyone under 25 years old.

The CU works hand in hand with other non-catholic organisations, such as the Christian Institute, Christian action Research and Education, Coalition for Marriage and Care not killing, Modern Slavery Bill and other Pro-life groups. This is to give a larger Catholic voice on many topics to Parliament on such issues as marriage, family life and trafficking.

In October CU's annual Craigmyle lecture was held at Notre Dame University. The Speaker was Sir Rocco Forte who spoke on "Morality in Business". This was well attended and very informative.

Other initiatives include The Our Father Project, sponsored by Christian Projects. This is aimed at primary schools in Surrey and Sussex for Year 5 pupils who are 10years old. They are asked what their perception of the 'Our Father' prayer is through writing and pictures. The aim of this project is that every Year 5 child in Christian schools in England and Wales, will know the Our Father. There were some very interesting entries and the usual howlers.

A lecture on 'Teaching Sexuality following the Mind of the Church', was attended by 35 people, the speaker was Louise Kirk. She gave an optimistic picture on how recent science backs up the Church teaching offering young and old alike a deeper understanding about the truth of the human person. She went on to suggest ways of teaching which confirms that parents are the prime educators, while involving the active support of school and parish within current sex education guidelines.



In his last report as chairman, Robert Rigby, said that the Catholic Union were the foot soldiers of the Catholic laity, and along with other Catholics we should continue to grow, flourish and gain more influence in today's ever secular world. As Pope Francis says "Do not be content to live a mediocre Christian Life, walk with determination along the path of holiness". Which UCM members follow, as a group and in conjunction with other Catholics.

Finally voting for President, Chairman and committee took place. A new Chairman, David O'Mahony, was elected and the rest of the committee, including the President Edward Leigh MP, were re-elected. Vice Presidents are John Barrie and Tony Cole.

Dates for 2016

25th February 2016 - Lecture on 'Catholicism in the Secular World' at Notre Dame University, London
Summer Party - TBC
Craigmyle Lecture - TBC
Annual General Meeting - November, London

Mary Piper National Vice President

Submitting copy for next issue

The deadline for articles and photos for the next edition of the Catholic Mother is 17th April 2016

Please send copy to Caroline Mills, National Media Officer, at catholic.mother@yahoo.co.uk.

Thank you.

Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord

Birmingham

Eileen MURPHY, St John the Baptist Foundation Tamworth
Dot DAVIES, St Peter's Foundation Bloxwich

Hallam

Josephine SIMS, St. Joseph's Foundation

Northampton

Nora FORSHAW, St. Francis of Assisi, Shefford. Past Diocesan President

Nottingham

Margaret EDWARD, Holy Spirit Foundation

Plymouth

Noreen GOSS, Exmouth Foundation

Portsmouth

Pat SMITH, Treasurer St Colman's, Cosham
Alan NEILSON, son-in-law of Anne Colley, St Colman's, Cosham
Kathleen ROGERS, St Boniface Foundation, Shirley

Shrewsbury

Kath PLUMB, Diocesan President, St. Wilfrid's Northwich
Michael STARR, son of Joan Starr, Sacred Heart and St Peter, Baguley
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WALSINGHAM WHISPERS

2016 – THE HOLY YEAR OF MERCY

We hope you have all had a wonderful and peaceful Christmas and your New Year Resolutions are taking effect – or perhaps, already broken!

Our thoughts now turn to our 2016 Walsingham pilgrimage which takes place on 4th and 5th July and already our work is beginning in earnest and we look forward to seeing as many of you as possible in this very special Holy Year of Mercy. As we reported in the Winter edition, the Walsingham Shrine has been chosen as a Holy Door shrine for 2016 where we can gain a Plenary Indulgence by praying for the Pope's intentions, going to Confession, receiving Holy Communion and walking through the Holy Door in prayer.

As the lead Diocese this year, Leeds is dealing with the rooms at the Pilgrim Bureau. If you have any queries regarding rooms please contact Brenda Stanton - email: m.stanton492@btinternet.com or 0113 286 4372.

I will shortly be writing to all Diocesan Presidents regarding the pilgrimage and requesting Stewards for the day - please do come forward to offer your services as it is a tremendous help to the Walsingham Sub Committee and enables the pilgrimage to run smoothly. It is a great privilege to honour Our Blessed Lady in this way.

This is the last publication of The Catholic Mother prior to the pilgrimage and you will find the Booking Form alongside this article. Please do send your booking form to Angela Mellors early and certainly prior to the cut off date of 13 June to ensure you receive your tickets etc in time and to allow us to have the necessary arrangements in place.

Finally, as always, the Walsingham Sub Committee look forward to welcoming you to Walsingham and we pray for a wonderful pilgrimage with lovely weather - please also remember Monsignor Armitage's challenge to us that we all try to bring ONE extra person to make it a really special day in this Holy Year of Mercy.

Maureen, Angela, Elizabeth and Paddy



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What Do We Do When We Pray

What do we do when we're facing an upcoming big event, celebration, or special occasion in our lives? We prepare for it. Holy Week and Easter are "big events" in the liturgical year of the Church and in the spiritual life of a Christian. So, as Christians, we prepare spiritually for these that, during Lent, we rededicate ourselves to prayer.

There are as many ways to pray as there are prayers in this world, but a few prayer methods can help us in particular to spiritually prepare ourselves during Lent:

1. Make your abstinence a prayer-in-action.
2. Renew yourself through personal reflective prayer.
3. Pray the Stations of the Cross.
4. Meditate on Holy Scripture with Lectio Divina.
5. Reflect deeper on your liturgical prayer.
6. Join or start a prayer group.
7. Pray with children or as a family.
8. Start a practice of daily prayer that will last after Lent.

Perhaps the best prayer advice is to use Lent as a time to instill prayer habits that will last long after Lent has concluded. Resources such as yearly prayer guides—for example, A Prayer Book of Catholic Devotions can get you started and help you stay consistent.

So enjoy your Lenten prayer. And don't think you have to do all the above. Perhaps choose one or two of these prayer methods to concentrate on—and then you can more fully experience the pilgrim journey toward Easter that is Lent.

<http://www.loyolapress.com/8-ways-to-pray-during-lent.htm>



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The Union of Catholic Mothers 71st Annual WALSINGHAM Pilgrimage

Mon & Tues 4th/5th JULY 2016 Led by the Diocese of Leeds

Booking Form: All Cheques should be made payable to: "The Union of Catholic Mothers Walsingham Sub-committee"

Diocese:		No. of Pilgrims @ £8.00 each (This includes preparatory Booklet produced by the Shrine for the Holy Year of Mercy) = £	No. of Abbey Link Mobility Bus Tickets: (Includes a seat in the Abbey Grounds) @ £2.50 each = £	TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED = £
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No. of Cars:	No. of Coaches	Mini Buses	Organiser's Name:	
Tel. No. of Coach Company [Inc. Area code]			Address:	
No. of Pilgrims proposing to take part in the Monday Evening Service	Do you require map with directions to the Shrine	YES/NO	Post Code:	
			Tel No:	
No. of Deacons who wish to participate	No. of Priests who wish to concelebrate		Signed _____ Date: _____	
<p>Bookings cut-off date is Monday 13th June.</p> <p>Fees for Priests/Deacons Please remember that the Foundation/Diocese is responsible for paying, and booking your Priests/Deacons. It is important that you indicate their number when making your bookings as facilities for them have to be made at the Shrine.</p>			<p>All Bookings to be sent a.s.a.p & before Monday 13th June to:</p> <p>Mrs Angela Mellors 24 Coronation Street Whitwell, Worksop Notts S80 4TG Tel: 0190 972 0707</p>	
			Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope of adequate size	



Monday 4th July
SERVICE OF LIGHT
8pm
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Tuesday 5th July
MASS
11.30am

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