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Cursillo is a movement of the Church providing a method by which Christians are empowered to grow through prayer, study and action, and enabled to share God's love with everyone

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**Deadline for next issue:**

If there is anything you would like to contribute to the next issue of Oxon Fourth, any thoughts, prayers, study recommendations or action tips that you would like to share, please send to Barbara McGarry ([communications.rep@oxfordcursillo.co.uk](mailto:communications.rep@oxfordcursillo.co.uk)) by Tues 31<sup>st</sup> August 2010.

# Oxon Fourth



# Oxford Anglican Cursillo

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## Greetings!

Thank you to everyone who has sent messages of support and prayer following my election.

Since the AGM in October a door has closed and a new one has opened for us; Oxford 7 was a wonderful experience for all who attended, guests and team alike, the only disappointment being the almost continuous rain which meant we could not get out for exercise and fresh air and enjoy the local countryside in our free time. It was, however, our last weekend at Cold Ash so also a sad occasion. We were as always warmly welcomed and well looked after during our stay.

We are now looking forward to Oxford 8 at Douai Abbey in October this year; members of the Secretariat have made several visits to the Abbey and the January committee meeting was held there. It is a wonderful venue and we have already been made very welcome there. Matthew Caminer and Peter Watsham, Lay Rector and Rector's Gofer for Oxford 8, have spent many hours working on the timetable to fit in with slightly different arrangements at Douai and are looking forward to forming the Team for that weekend in the near future.

I have chaired two meetings of the Secretariat since October; many of us are new to our roles, and are still learning the ropes, but it is wonderful to be part of a group for whom Cursillo is a motivating force.

**ULTREYA!**

**Alison Shaw**

Lay Director

**The Living Faith Prayer:** Gracious God, you call us to a living faith in the future as well as in the present; open our eyes to the opportunities before us in our parishes and deaneries and in the daily discipleship of our own lives. May we sustain and nourish our inner lives so that we can serve others effectively, and offer to all people the transforming love of Jesus Christ our risen Lord. Amen

I love this prayer and think it is very appropriate for Cursillo - we said it at the beginning of our Secretariat meeting and at the Ultreya in Abingdon. For those who would like to use this prayer in their daily lives, Living Faith prayer cards have been distributed to all churches in the Diocese and are also available from Diocesan Church House. For those who sometimes struggle with their prayer life, Bishop John has also produced "Prayer - a simple guide" which I have found very helpful - these also are available through local churches or direct from Church House.

## Future Dates

You will find a list of dates for future events in this publication, but do also please look at the Oxford Cursillo website on a regular basis to keep yourself up to date with what is going on.

[www.oxfordcursillo.co.uk](http://www.oxfordcursillo.co.uk)

## Giving Matters

I'm sure that most of us will be very familiar with the concept of some sort of organised giving in connection with our churches. The form this takes varies from church to church; it may be called Planned Giving, Stewardship, Regular Giving or there may be some other label.

There is a lot to be said for some sort of regular giving: for a church or charity, it is very helpful when budgeting to have some definite indication of a certain amount coming in for each accounting period. But for the individual giver, there can be more than just the useful financial planning. To give on a regular basis, however small in monetary terms the gift is, indicates an understanding of and an ongoing commitment to the aims and objectives of the recipient.

Oxford Cursillo has been a registered charity since 2006. Up till now, our income has in the main been from donations at Ultreyas, from individuals following weekends, and from time to time also occasional donations. We have been very grateful for all of these, and one considerable benefit of our charitable status has been that we have been able to claim the tax back from those who have provided a Gift Aid declaration. However, we only have a very few people who give on a regular planned basis and it would be good to be able to add to this number.

May I therefore ask you to consider prayerfully the idea of giving to Oxford Cursillo on a planned basis? The amount may be as small (or as large) as you feel able to give, but it would help with future weekends to know that there could be a sound regular committed income as a foundation for planning. For example, if someone were to give £10 per month by Gift Aid, that would go a long way towards funding a Guest to go on a future Cursillo weekend at Douai Abbey. (Each £10 that is Gift Aided at present attracts a further contribution of £2.50 from HM Revenue & Customs.)

I can let you have a Standing Order form with all the necessary bank details, also a Gift Aid form for those who are tax-payers and would like Oxford Cursillo to be able to reclaim the tax on their donations (since becoming a registered charity we have been able to reclaim no less than £2,450).

**Margaret Cotterell**, Treasurer, 26 Edwin Road, Didcot OX11 8LE

email: [Treasurer@oxfordcursillo.co.uk](mailto:Treasurer@oxfordcursillo.co.uk)

## Dates for your diary

**Saturday 17th April**

**Day of Deeper Understanding**

The Soltau Centre at St James the Less, Henley Road, Stubbings SL6 6QW

**Saturday 24th July**

**Diocesan Ultreya and Summer Picnic**

Diocesan Church House, North Hinksey Lane, Oxford, OX2 0NB

**21st -24th October**

**Oxford #8**

Douai Abbey

**Saturday 6th November**

**Ultreya and AGM**

The Soltau Centre at St James the Less, Henley Road, Stubbings, SL6 6QW

See [www.oxfordcursillo.co.uk](http://www.oxfordcursillo.co.uk) for the latest updates

## Cursillo 4<sup>th</sup> Day, Reunion Groups

It is important to ensure that all Cursillistas have the opportunity to join, or form, a reunion group - the heartbeat of the Cursillo method. Regular meetings of small groups of people who share their spiritual journey encourages individuals to engage with their spirituality and develop a rule of life based on piety, study and action.

In order to ensure that all Cursillistas belong to, or have access to, a reunion group in their area it would be really helpful if everyone could let Gilly Robinson, our 4<sup>th</sup> Day Co-ordinator know the following information by e-mail ([4th.day@oxfordcursillo.co.uk](mailto:4th.day@oxfordcursillo.co.uk)) or post to 40 Bullingdon Road, Oxford OX4 1QJ

Name: .....

Reunion group area: .....

Group members: .....

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.....  
.....

It would also be helpful if a Cursillista within each group could be nominated as a key point of contact to help facilitate the distribution of such things as Oxon Fourth and therefore cutting down on postage costs. This would not necessarily be a permanent role and can easily be changed by letting Gilly know.

## Calling all Musicians & Hospitality Enthusiasts!!

We are looking for volunteers who are gifted musically and would be willing to play at weekends, Clausuras, Ultreyas and other events.

Similarly, anyone who would be willing to bake/contribute to the refreshments at these events and/or organise the party night of a Cursillo weekend.

If you know anyone, or are willing to volunteer yourself to help out at any of these occasions, please let either Gilly (4<sup>th</sup> Day co-ordinator) or Peter (Weekend co-ordinator) know.

**Thank you**

## Ready for Action?



Group Reunion is a wonderful time for reflection on one's own faith journey in the company of other caring and supportive Christians but I wonder if, like me, you reach the Apostolic Action section and your heart sinks. What have I done towards transforming the world for Christ since we last met, even if that was two months ago, and does it feel like a success or a disappointment?

Presumably those words success and disappointment are there in order to enable us to consider more fully the meaning of all our Christian actions but they irritate me – how are we to judge, especially in early stages, what our apostolic actions are and do we ever know if we have succeeded or not?

Two things I believe avidly which help: firstly, the words of Ivan Mann, “When you are doing your own work with God, people will notice and want to know what you are doing and why.” Secondly, that it is the action of the Holy Spirit, working in and through us, which transforms the world.

Developing our own personal relationship with God through piety and study is the natural precursor to becoming an apostle and, as we do this, the Holy Spirit can perform miracles. Most often we have to trust God to use those things we see as disappointments and failures and transform them for his purposes and glory and, of course, we need to look out for, and be ready for, the myriad opportunities we are given to witness to our faith.

Remember the mission of the first apostles (*Matt 10:7-14*): proclaim the good news, if people are interested stay with them, if not shake the dust from your feet, don't dwell on it too long, and then move on. Even if there is no immediate response the kingdom has been shared and things will never be quite the same again.

My diary has little quotes for each week and this one seems fairly appropriate – ‘prepare like mad then go with the flow.’ Our action is to be prepared for whatever comes and to respond to the best of our ability. For the most amazing action trust the flow of the Holy Spirit every time!

**Angela Linton**

*Spiritual Director for Cursillo in Oxford Diocese*

## Day of Deeper Understanding

The Secretariat hopes that many Cursillistas will wish to take this opportunity to refresh or deepen their understanding of the Cursillo movement. If you have not already responded to the invitation, please let Alison Shaw know if you are coming in order to facilitate arrangements for the day:

[lay.director@oxfordcursillo.co.uk](mailto:lay.director@oxfordcursillo.co.uk).

## The 3 day Cursillo weekend experience

My sponsor had always spoken of Cursillo with great enthusiasm, though I must admit to feeling a bit apprehensive when I drove to the conference centre last year for this possibly mysterious course. What was going to happen?

Clues of great thoughtfulness to the guests had already emerged - the gentle warning to try and clear heavy workloads a few days before and after the weekend, the warning about early rising (I needed this), and the suggestion of bringing one's pillow.

And then it began. Kind and welcoming hospitality, with tremendous attention to detail meant that my fellow guests and I were supported on a loving "cushion" of fellowship while enjoying a varied weekend of fascinating talks, discussions, praying and meditation, singing, worship with regular meals and refreshment. We even tried art and creative expression. It was marvellous to meet such a wide group of interesting people. It became movingly evident that many people were praying for us, and that each individual was upheld by the Cursillo community over the weekend. There was plenty of humour and practical down-to-earth understanding in our proceedings. As the weekend progressed, the team entertained us with an amazing evening of party piece performances, with much laughter all round. It was one of the many joyful surprises. I could tell that a huge amount of detailed planning must have gone into the organisation of the 3 day weekend.

How did it affect me? It is fair to say that this once-in-a-lifetime event as a guest was a life-changing experience. After a rather grim year, and at the natural crossroads in my life of approaching retirement and starting to feel a bit useless, I was made to feel of value, and the joy of renewal and revitalisation in my life has been of great benefit. My prayer life is transformed and I am part of a regular support network whose encouragement I greatly value.

If you haven't made your Cursillo yet, please do. I found it amazing! Just go as you are and be open. But allow a few days afterwards for your feet to settle back to the ground!

*Janet Proudman Oxford #7*

## 4<sup>th</sup> Day

The pre-Christmas Ultreya held at Val Bradley's home in Swallowfield was a lovely occasion and we all enjoyed Val's wonderful soup and home-made bread before wending our way home. Old Windsor, Abingdon and North Ascot have all hosted very successful and well attended Ultreyas this year, with a number of guests, which was very encouraging. Ultreyas are the Cursillo community made visible by its gathering together and the ideal is that Ultreyas should happen on a regular basis in different parts of the Diocese; in view of the size of our Diocese, there would be no reason why two Ultreyas could not be held at the same time in different areas, and Gilly Robinson would love to hear from anyone who felt able to organise one; as Cursillo grows in the Diocese it would be hoped that the Servant Community would comprise a 4<sup>th</sup> Day team with one member from each Archdeaconry taking responsibility for Ultreyas in their area. As well as giving Cursillistas the chance to catch up with those they may not have seen for a while, Ultreyas can be an opportunity to invite Christian friends whom you may wish to introduce to the Cursillo method and who may eventually wish to experience a Cursillo weekend.

## Post-card from Douai



Only seven months to go before the big move to Douai! This is a huge shift for us after holding our first seven Cursillo weekends at Cold Ash.

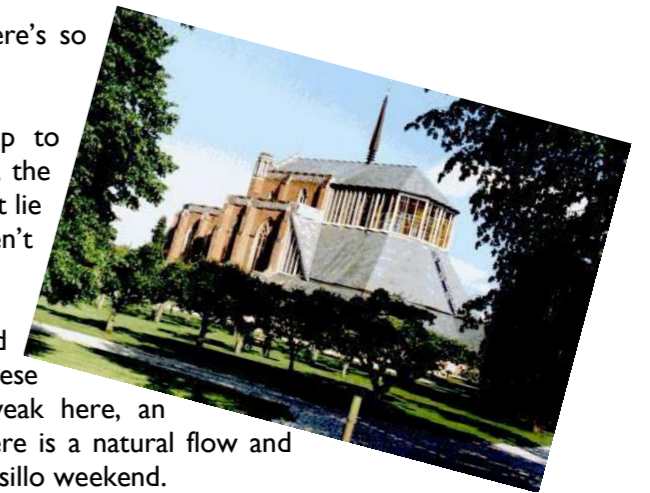
We have visited Douai several times and now have a very good feel for all the facilities. We can even find our own way round without getting lost! We understand most of the challenges of running a Cursillo weekend there. One thing that we realised straight away is that we can make absolutely no assumptions.

## Where are we now?

In some ways, it's almost like starting again. There's so much to do ... so much to think about.

We have gone through the timetable from top to bottom, being careful to protect the fundamentals, the fifteen talks, five meditations and daily Eucharist that lie at the heart of a Cursillo weekend. We haven't forgotten the other features either.

The natural rhythm of the Douai community and the very different layout mean that all of these ingredients need to be carefully reviewed: a tweak here, an adjustment there, to make sure it all fits, that there is a natural flow and that it still has the look and feel of an authentic Cursillo weekend.



## What remains to be done?

We now have a new timetable ... a new challenge for the #8 team as they, also, get the feel.

Now all the manuals have to be reviewed. This is a really good opportunity to do some housekeeping, straightening out any inconsistencies that may have crept in.

## What can you do?

Prayer, prayer and yet more prayer! If you are planning to sponsor someone to be a Guest on #8, get the forms in now, preferably before Easter. If you think you may be called to serve on the team, let the Lay Rector know straight away. And, oh yes ... pray.



*Matthew Caminer, Lay Rector, Oxford #8*