

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

It seems a long time since the last edition. Many things have happened; most of them good. We had a very happy Diocesan Ultreya at Church House in June. There was a successful East Berks Ultreya in September. Sadly the Oxford 3 Weekend had to be postponed. However, everyone who attended the weekend 'Building Firmer Foundations' thought it was very beneficial and left us with many things to think and pray about. A short report will be found later in this magazine. Although we seem to be struggling against many difficulties the overwhelming sense that God is with us continues. Long may it do so!

Jill Iredale will be standing down as Treasurer at the AGM. She has done four years hard work both as Treasurer and as Lay Rector of Oxford 2 and so we say 'thank you, Jill' and we look forward to seeing you at Cursillo events in the future.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank Jacque Griffiths for the sterling work she has done as Palanca Secretary. She has taught me much about the imaginative use of prayer. It is time someone else took on this essential task, which may have to be split into smaller parts. If no one comes forward at the AGM I earnestly ask you to pray about this. Advent and Christmas are upon us – so I wish you all a

Good Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Mary Willets

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Matthew's Butterfly

Many, many thanks to everyone for the magnificent gift, that I received from you all to mark the completion of my term as Lay Director. When life permits, I greatly enjoy working tapestries. This butterfly is complex, using far more colours than I have used before, so progress is slow, but absorbing. Unfortunately, I do not have a more recent photograph than the one I took in July (see Centre Spread).

One wing is now complete - a real challenge, given that my colour vision is deficient!

From my seat on the back benches I will continue to watch, participate and encourage. I thank God for the great gift he has given us all.

Ultreya! Matthew Caminer

CURSILLO LEADERS' WORKSHOP REPORT: 4-6 August 2006

By Jill Iredale

In high summer in the beautiful Warwickshire countryside, 22 Cursillistas travelling from many parts of England met together at Offa House, for one of the three Cursillo Leaders' Workshops (CLW) which are held annually.

Mike and Pat Hobday from Coventry and Jean Radley from Cumbria were the small Weekend Team who welcomed Angela, Mary and me upon our arrival on the Friday evening. We soon met up with other participants from Blackburn, Sheffield, Worcester, London Carlisle, Ely, Lincoln and Portsmouth. After supper and introductions we began what was to be a busy weekend schedule of talks, discussions and worship – oh, and eating of course – the chef at Offa House is good! On this first evening, after an opening Ultreya, we looked again at what it means to be 'The Church', before Evening Prayer in the Chapel.

An early start with Morning Prayer on Saturday allowed a full day to look at many aspects of Cursillo afresh: The Fourth Day, the Servant Community, Pre-Cursillo, the authentic 3-day Weekend, building the Cursillo Community and the work of the British Anglican Cursillo Council (BACC). Discussion times with other people were encouraging and helpful, especially for those Dioceses – like ours – who have just started running Weekends and are experiencing a variety of concerns.

'In deep gratitude for this moment, this meal, these people, we give ourselves to you'. Late morning Eucharists on both Saturday and Sunday gave the right perspective and also gave those who wished an opportunity to take part by reading, praying or serving.

Music ran throughout the Weekend with two Cursillistas sharing the worship song accompaniment and another providing splendid accordion accompaniment at the social singing and dancing on Saturday evening.

Sunday allowed us to look at Cursillo Leadership, Deepening out Union with God and the Job Ahead, but there was also time for Two by Two dialogue with a space to share – with a chosen person – some of our life experiences, and to pray for one another.

Then suddenly it was Sunday lunchtime and time to say goodbye; to return to our own Dioceses and the little part of God's planet where we are asked to serve.

So, should you go on a CLW Weekend? Yes! If you are a Cursillista who has been part of a team once, then the dates and venues for 2007 are:-

23-25 March at Bletchingley in Surrey

22-24 June at Offa House in Warwickshire

If you are interested please contact a member of the Secretariat.

BUILDING FIRMER FOUNDATIONS

A REMINDER OF SUMMER

Now that the dark days of November and December are upon us, with wind and rain, let us remind ourselves of summer. In midsummer we had our Diocesan Ultreya and Family Picnic at Church House in Oxford. It was a beautiful day in so many ways. The sun shone so that we were able to have our picnic in the gardens. We were able to welcome many of the guests from Oxford 2 into their first Ultreya. Two children came and joined in the crèche activity. The presence of The Holy Spirit poured out around us! Many of us were returning to work at our Church fetes in the afternoon and we all went on our way feeling uplifted.

For our crèche activity we took the idea of a picnic and thought about what Jesus would have eaten. A very different diet from most children of today! We realized that the bible tells us quite a lot about Jesus and fish, so fish must have been an important ingredient in his meals. There is one story which describes Jesus barbecuing fish for breakfast of the shores of Galilee.

So we made a little fish for each of the adults to take home in their pockets. On one side the fish had scaly silver paper and on the other looked like the fish drawn below.

GOD me

*I will give thanks to you, O Lord, among the people; I will sing your praises among the nations.
For your mercy is greater than the heavens, and your faithfulness reaches to the clouds.*

Psalm 108 v 3-4

Sadly the planned Oxford 3 Weekend had to be postponed. Ten of us attended the retreat at Cold Ash for both Saturday and Sunday, two came for Saturday only and Peter Watsham dropped in for a couple of hours. We spent time in worship, prayer, socialising, listening to 4 talks and on Sunday morning discussing where we were and what action we needed to take.

Many thanks to Mike and Jean Whitton, Father Iain, and Cliff Scott, who gave talks on Reunion groups, the Fourth Day, Sponsorship and The Servant Community. They gave us more understanding about Cursillo and we were given time to think about and discuss the issues raised.

We also passed an hour on Saturday evening in prayer vigil for the Wakefield 29 Weekend at which Suzy Webster from Oxford Diocese was a guest.

Three points of action and understanding came from this weekend.

1) Sponsorship

This is a much misunderstood word and too often is not done well. The word is taken from the use of Sponsors in Baptism. It has nothing to do with raising money by sponsoring people for charitable events! We all agreed that a much better word to use would be **MENTOR**. The mentor is both advisor and, most importantly, responsible for praying for the person being sponsored for a Weekend.

2) Reunion groups

The building blocks of Cursillo are the Reunion Groups. Is everyone a member of a reunion group? Do the groups meet regularly? Are they healthy? Is there a Key Person for each Group? The Secretariat has begun to look at our situation, and, in the New Year, will try to help those who are struggling.

3) Prayer

Cursillo is based on prayer. Jackie provided a wall of paper bricks with the name of each person on our mailing list written on one brick. We realized that as individuals we did not know all these people or whether they had access to reunion groups. It was unanimously decided that a Prayer Diary was required, and that we would use names only and not titles. The Diary for December and January is inserted into this magazine. We would be grateful if you could use this Diary; as we are so few it is not asking a lot. The names have been randomly listed and will continue to be so. Thank you.