



Newsletter May 2021

Greetings from our Lay Director...

Hello everyone,

I'm sitting enjoying the beautiful sunshine and just basking in Gods amazing creation as I write this, it reminds me of a book I was given called 'Sitting in Gods sunshine, resting in his love' hm! Maybe that's a review for another time! I hope you are all keeping well and coping we emerge from the Covid restrictions. I walked into and was quite overwhelmed by the sheer number of people in the town centre, after so many months of empty street it's going to take some getting used to.



It's quite a while since we produced a newsletter, partly because we had no one to put it together and partly because not a lot has happened in the last 12 months, but it suddenly feels like that's about to change... I'm just praying that Covid doesn't rear its ugly head again.

Our plans for Chester 61 are gathering pace, I'm very excited to see how God uses the 2-day Cursillo, Joan & her emerging team are in the forefront of my prayers.

We are really hoping the AGM this year will be held face to face rather than via Zoom, but we will have to confirm that nearer the time. I am very grateful to the inventor of Zoom (other video conferencing platforms are available!) because it has meant that Secretariat meetings, Ultreyas and, for some, work meetings have been able to continue. God bless IT wizards.

We have 4 vacancies arising on the Secretariat, which we hope to fill at the AGM in July. Please pray that we find the right people to take on the roles, could it be you? Please get in touch if you'd like to know more about any of the roles.

Tony Rablen will take over from Veronica as Diocesan Spiritual Director from the AGM. Bishop Mark will commission him but we are still sorting a date as, unfortunately the AGM clashes with General Synod so he can't do it on the day.

Finally, following a discussion (via letter) with Bishop Mark about how Chester Cursillo can best support him, we are planning on restarting the Prayer Cycle which was so well received last year.

I hope you will keep the Secretariat and all these plans in your prayers and you will remain in mine.

Ultreya! Carol (Written in April before the May showers!)

Chester Cursillo Welcomes Tony Rablin, Our Newly Appointed Spiritual Director.....

I began my adult life by marrying Christine, now Revd. Canon Christine Rablen, Vicar of St. Alban's & St. John's, Offerton in Stockport.

I then became a Social Worker in North Yorkshire, before being ordained in 1982. I have served in various parishes in and around Hull. After Christine entered parish ministry, I worked mainly in the NHS as a Chaplain in the mental health services in Essex & London. I retired 3 years ago.



The precise details of my involvement in Cursillo are now a bit hazy.....but it was somewhere around 1995 that I was sponsored by a churchwarden of a previous parish, who was instrumental in getting Cursillo going in York Diocese. So, I made my Cursillo with Ripon & Wakefield Dioceses, who then went on to gift Cursillo to York Diocese. I have remained involved – in different ways – since then. I staffed on weekends for York and Chelmsford, and was, for several years, part of a very committed 4th Day Group.

When we moved to Chester Diocese 2 years ago, I was in touch with Irene Hinde about our local 4th. Day Group. If you knew Irene, it will not surprise you to it was she who encouraged me to put my name forward. I am very pleased to say that the Secretariat and the Bishop approved of Irene's nomination, and I will be your Spiritual Director from the AGM onwards. I look forward to it!



Chester Cursillo Roles...are you being called?

Weekend Co-ordinator....is a very rewarding role. You are the one to make first contact with the Participants, which is lovely, and by the time you actually meet them you feel they are friends already.

The role involves booking either Foxhill or Wistaston for the appropriate weekend dates, after discussion with the Secretariat, receiving applications from Participants and keeping in touch with them about the weekend. As weekend co-ordinator you will pass on any dietary and medical needs of the Participants and Staff to the venue. As the weekend begins you will be there to greet and welcome the Participants...it is lovely to be the first one to meet them and introduce them to the Lay Rector

Foxhill and Wistaston make it easy to plan for weekends as staff at both places are both very helpful and pleasant to deal with.

Yes, twice a year it's fairly busy, good organisational skills are needed to do the job. I always kept a list of times and dates when to do things. It is an enjoyable role and there is a sense of real satisfaction when it all works out well!

I will be available to help and support anybody who takes on the role. *Kath*



Palanca Secretary..has two main focuses, the sending and receiving of palanca to and from weekends occurring home and away and sending monthly prayer requests to Chester cursillitas. Weekends occur nearly all year round and these will be found through a list of websites connected to different Cursillo groups. You will send Chester wall palanca to chosen weekends as a reflection of prayer from Chester Cursillistas. For Chester weekends you will request that wall palanca be sent to you.

Once a month you will send out a prayer request letter to Chester Cursillista. This is something you can develop as time goes by; includes prayer requests for weekends, usually those you have sent

palanca to , prayer requests for Chester's weekends.

This is all done through email (you will have a database of Cursillistas' emails) so some computer confidence and basic skills is good.

I will always be on hand to help and support. **Sue**



Chester Cursillo Treasurer...Day to day book keeping

Collate and keep receipts, invoices and expenses

Maintain records

Maintain the bank account

Liaise with event venues and make payment for Cursillo Weekends

Make gift aid claims to HMRC

Purchase supplies for prayer cycle

Assist the secretary in making the yearly returns to the Charity Commission

Maintain Cursillo donation records

Attend secretariat meetings

Advise on procedures where necessary

Arrange for an end of year Audit by a competent independent person not connected with Cursillo Chester

The role is one of maintaining solvency of Cursillo Chester and compliance with charity commission regulations and providing specific advice and suggestions where necessary. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about the treasurer's role. **Tony**

treasurer@chestercursillo.org.uk



Communications Officer Role...I had no idea what I was taking on when I first volunteered to stand as Chester Cursillo Communications Officer. Hopefully I can pass on what I've learnt, and encourage you into taking on the role, which is becoming vacant.

The highlights for me have been, being able to be actively involved within Chester Cursillo and being part of the team who made the National Ultreya 2019 such an amazing day.

The role has four main elements:

Sending out emails to the Chester Cursillo Ultreya

Keeping the website updated

Maintaining the 'Database' – an Excel spreadsheet

Attending Secretariat meetings

None of the above are difficult, or time consuming. Whoever takes on the role will be able to

'Shadow' me for as long as takes for them to feel comfortable in the role.

Sending out emails is very easy as there is a list of all active Cursillistas, which I've, (very grandiosely) called the 'Global' list. Most of the emails are written by the Lay Director, so no great literary prowess is required 😊

The website is very simple to update. It's mainly keeping the details of Weekends and Ultreya up to date.

Secretariat meetings take place every few months and the minutes are taken by the Secretary, so this no requirement to take or produce minutes

The database is mainly updated following a weekend.

The main joys for me have, getting to know my fellow Cursillistas on the Secretariat, increasing my understanding of Cursillo and what it means to so many people. I can only recommend the role of Communications Officer in the highest possible terms and you will receive more than you give.

God Bless and Ultreya!!! **Anne**



Book Review by Nick Hutt

A Comedian's Prayer Book – Frank Skinner

When it comes to Group Reunions, although I generally have more to say about Study than Action I struggle. Possibly, this is because I am not an avid reader nor am I one for deep theological arguments. It might also explain why I enjoyed this book immensely. It's short, only 56 pages, and covers wide breadth of faith without once considering just how many angels you might find on the head of a pin!

So how to describe it? Firstly, it is not a 'funny' book. Sure it has touches of humour, after all it is written by Frank Skinner. But it is also a book that raises serious aspects of Christianity in thoughtful and challenging ways. Frank likens himself to a pilgrim who is serious and completely devout but is more comfortable wearing a jester's outfit than sackcloth.

The book is divided into 'prayers', each on different aspects of faith, life and everything. Well not quite everything. After all it is only 56 pages! Each 'prayer' is Frank putting his thoughts on the subject to God. He raises questions and challenges but leaves it to the reader to draw their own conclusions or, perhaps, have their own similar conversation with God.

In a short review I am not going to try to delve into any of the contents of the book, it would be unfair to try and summarise the depth and breadth

of thought that has gone into each carefully crafted 'prayer'.

Frank has been very open in this book about his faith, his questions and his relationship with God. It is well written, easy to read, will make you question and smile in equal measure. And as he says in the introduction, by writing a prayer book no one can accuse him of being too commercial.



During Lent and Easter time I follow reflections sent by Tearfund. It is a Christian charity that partners with churches in more than 50 of the world's poorest countries Gideon Heugh is a poet who works as a senior copy writer for Tearfund..his full poem for Easter and the Easter season.

All that is good is growing.
Yesterday and so many yesterdays
it seemed dead. But now
the deep God stirs in the earth,
and seed and root remember sky
and brightened make their move
towards it. Life rubs its eyes, spring
no longer a dream to sustain
through the colding days
but a reality born from sunlight
and bluebells and the sure refrain
of the chiffchaff.

All that is good is growing;
the darker season has had its time
and will do so again, a knowledge
to make these thrill bloomings
all the sweeter. The return of the swallows
is only marked because they left,
and will leave. But today in the fields
the lambs are becoming sure of their feet,
and green is dancing once more in the trees,
and in the gardens there is a hope
showing itself in the eyes of the flowers.

I see that I am not dead,
nor is the hope that I was once born into.

I see the meaning in our burials –
that despairing we might rise for air
and unexpectedly find it, and explore it
with lungs made new by thankfulness.

Even though the last stands of cold
may cling to us, along with the clenching memory
of winters past (all those dyings of our hearts)

even so, today and so many todays:
all that is good is growing.



God bless, Sue x

Our Journey in Faith...a 2 Day Cursillo

I attended the webinar held by The British Anglican Cursillo Council on the 13th February 2021 to discuss the offering of '2 day Cursillo'.

A bit of background info as to why BACC had decided to agree to the offering of '2 day Cursillo', it is mainly due to the increasing of venue costs, falling numbers of participants (due to length of course and work commitments) difficulties in recruiting staff due to length and expense. BACC will be re-writing the talk handbooks etc but this has been put on hold due to Covid restrictions so we will need to use the existing course paperwork and adjust accordingly.

During 2019 three experimental 2-day Cursillos were held
1 in Scotland – September 2019
1 in Southwell & Notts – May 2019
1 in Chelmsford – October 2019

All these went very well, the timetable was changed to accommodate in slightly different ways, but still had the 15 talks and 5 meditations (although shortened) and included daily worship (Eucharist).

We were then split into groups to have a look at issues we may encounter when organising a 2 day Cursillo. The group I was in came up with the following things to consider.

- *How the timetable would need to change*
- *Were extra training days required?*
- *Focus on what should be included.*
- *Cut out the clutter.*
- *Talk to the Dioceses that have already held a 2 day Cursillo.*
- *Call the Friday day one.*
- *Make sure the flow of the weekend remained the same.*
- *Get the sponsors more involved.*
- *Keep the number of staff the same.*
- *Let things go – Remembering that its God's time.*
- *Think about combining some of the talks – perhaps having the ideal talk on the first evening.*

An encounter with God, yourself and others.....

- *Decide when Palanca is given (each day or just 1, and sponsor to deliver the rest in the week after the participants Cursillo.*

*We are aiming to hold the first 2-day Cursillo in October 2021 so please hold Joan Clare and her team in your prayers while they prepare this exciting time. **Tracy, Love and prayers***

A Date for Your Diary....

Chester Cursillo AGM & Ultreya

Saturday 10th July 10am

At St Michaels & All Angels Runcorn

Yes a face to face in person meeting - Wow!

Looking forward to seeing you there

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*Come Holy Spirit,
fill the hearts of your faithful
and kindle in them the fire of your love.
Send forth your Spirit
and they shall be created.
And You shall renew the face of the earth.*

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ULTREYA

Something to look forward to.....

Ultreya GB 2021 - a wonderful opportunity to get together after not having a GB Ultreya last year.

Saturday 4th September at Norwich Cathedral

8:00 to 5:00pm

Witness, pray, sing, fun



Please get in touch with me if you'd like to go & let's see if we can travel and stay together to keep costs to a minimum. Carol