

# Oxon Fourth



# Oxford Anglican Cursillo



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A joint message from our Lay and Spiritual Directors, Stu Vaughan and the Rev Andrew Foran

# **An exciting future lies ahead with closer diocesan links**

Why has Oxford Cursillo been so quiet these recent months?

Well actually much has been going on behind the scenes. Stu and I and the Secretariat members felt it was important first to seek a meeting with Bishop Steven of Oxford and regain his support. Stu and I duly met with the Bishop on July 14<sup>th</sup> and we had a very fruitful and positive discussion.

Bishop Steven said he was very keen to give Cursillo his full backing. We discussed communication and ways of relating more generally with the diocese. Stu proposed it would make sense if the diocesan website referenced Cursillo (makes us look more joined up). Could some resource pages (who, what, how, OxonFourth, events etc) be hosted? Bishop Steven referred us to the Diocesan Communications Office and this is an avenue we are now exploring.

Bishop Steven said he was keen to use Cursillo as another way of aligning to the diocese's strategy of 'building a Christ-like' Church. This will involve an initial focus on engaging the clergy and getting them more involved (taster & meditation days etc).

The Bishop recognised that both Cursillo and the Church as a whole was greatly stressed by Covid. He is keen for Cursillo to re-energise the Oxford diocese clergy. This should have numerous benefits as we build up Cursillo in the diocese again. (This might take between one and two years).

First step will be Andrew getting commissioned (at a Christ Church Evensong) and then we will engage with the Revd. Canon Sally Welch, the Diocesan Spiritual Adviser, as she continues to settle in her new appointment at Christ Church. At the time of going to press arrangements for Andrew's Commissioning have been delayed due to recent national events etc. But as soon as the date is arranged we will pass the message around on our usual communication channels including our Facebook page.

We think the future is really exciting. No doubt we will have numerous planning sessions in front of us. We recognise there is a lot more experience outside of the Secretariat so it would be really great if any of you would like to get involved in these. Do contact us:

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*Stu Vaughan: 07909 525235 and [thomasjs.v@icloud.com](mailto:thomasjs.v@icloud.com)*

Welcome to our Autumn issue. Our main feature is, of course, *Ultreya GB in London*, with contributions from some of those who attended from Oxford Diocese. Pictures are supplied by *Cursillistas* from other parts of Britain, with permission from our president, Beth Roberts.

**Deadline for our Spring issue is March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023**  
Please send articles and ideas to me, Vivien Leeming at  
[v.leeming05@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:v.leeming05@tiscali.co.uk)



## Banners at St Paul's



# Colours of Cursillo in London!



Procession over the Millenium Bridge to Southwark Cathedral



## Pilgrims from Oxford diocese had an enjoyable and inspiring day

My friend Jane Creasy (Oxford 19) and I, Mary Cassidy (Oxford 17) travelled to London from Wokingham for the National Ultreya. It needed a fairly early start, but we made it to St Paul's Cathedral in good time for the Pilgrim Prayers, Litany and the lusty singing of *The Spirit lives to set us free* (Walk in the light). It sounded marvellous, echoing up to the Whispering Gallery.

It was amazing to see many Cursillo banners leaning against those great columns in readiness to lead us out for the Walk of Witness. I don't know how many people gathered there under the dome, but the group was really dwarfed by that majestic space.

As we made our orderly way slowly away from St Paul's towards Southwark Cathedral one of the members of SLUG (Southwark and London Ultreya Organising Group!) frequently led us in a rousing and encouraging cry of ULTREYA! Marshalls were very busy, in their special HiViz jackets (decorated with a stunning butterfly), keeping the procession out of other people's way and not letting anyone get left behind.

Once the procession had reached Southwark, after gathering a number of additional Cursillistas at the end of the Millenium Bridge, we were warmly welcomed and invited to partake of refreshments laid out along the cathedral nave. Banners were placed against the west wall of the nave - Jane and I scanned them anxiously, hoping to spot our Oxon bull, but without luck - no banner and thus no rallying point where we might find familiar faces. What a disappointment! (*Editor's note: Due to a last minute family situation the person who was to have brought the Oxford banner was unable to attend and it was too late to make alternative arrangements.*)

Floating Group Reunions gave us a chance to connect better with a few of the many Cursillistas we didn't know, and time flew as it always does, with conversations not always sticking to the defined pattern on the card!

I hope the two witness talks (two because of the joint hosting - one from London Cursillo, one from Southwark) will be published as it is almost impossible to outline them briefly and give a decent impression of how powerful they both were. (*Editor's note: it is hoped to feature them in BACC Pages.*)

Melanie Nazareth (Southwark) spoke about her experience of a clear re-direction, way out of her comfort zone, onto the path of environmental activism - she even walked the 500 miles to Glasgow for COP26. She challenged us all to "step up" and play the parts we are led into by the Holy Spirit. Whew!

Monica Bolley (London) spoke of her efforts to bring racism to an end, through the work of the Racial Justice Priority Group, and how the support and prayer of others had given her the strength to tell her story and point out the "pernicious grip" and consequent catastrophic effect of racism in our society. We also discovered later that Monica has a beautiful singing voice when she led some *a capella* singing before the Eucharist.

Another benefit of the dual hosting was that we were treated to the attention of several bishops during the course of the day. The Rt Rev & Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally gave the blessing at St Paul's, the Bishop of Southwark having sent a message as he was unable to be there in person. The Eucharist was presided over by a former Bishop of Oxford, The Rt Rev & Rt Hon Lord Harries of Pentregarth and the rousing sermon touching on the cost of discipleship and the importance of our response was preached by the Rt Rev Rob Wickham, Bishop of Edmonton!

The singing and the talks and the togetherness were excellent - SLUG should be congratulated for an excellent Ultreya. Thank you too to the individual speakers.



# Another Oxford pilgrim was inspired to write in verse!

This Cursillista went to London, to London I went,  
By car and Tube I travelled, to reach the annual event

**ULTREYA!**

My friend went with me and we had some fun  
Our Lord was gracious to us, the day was bathed in sun

**ULTREYA!**

As we got into St. Paul's Cathedral, the Bishop passed by us  
We joined in with prayers and hymn, *Walk in the Light* was the chorus

**ULTREYA!**

The regional banners fluttered up high as we walked along  
We chatted to each other and some Cursillistas burst into worship song

**ULTREYA!**

Arriving at Southwark cathedral, we were offered coffee and tea  
Bags of goodies were in abundance, one was a cross surrounded with a C

**ULTREYA!**

Mixing with like minded, brothers and sisters in the Lord,  
Sharing in the group reunion was special when talking about God's word.

**ULTREYA!**

There were two witness talks, both were from the heart,  
To change things around them, the ladies felt God had set them apart.

**ULTREYA!**

For lunch we went to the market to buy some lovely food,  
Food and Fellowship with others made it all so good.

**ULTREYA!**

Back in the Cathedral waiting the Eucharist to share  
Hymns and songs of praise and worship filled the air.

**ULTREYA!**

We proclaimed our faith in Christ's death and resurrection  
With the bread of life and cup of salvation.

**ULTREYA!**

We shared the peace with one another  
Remembering we are in the Lord, sister and brother

**ULTREYA!**

Jesus heard our praise and worship during that brilliant day  
Our first National Ultreya over, with peace we were sent on our way.

**ULTREYA!**

These two Cursillistas travelled home happy as can be  
Will we go to the next one? Oh let's wait and see ...

**ULTREYA!**

**(Ed itor: The writer wishes to remain anonymous.)**

# “A wonderful occasion”



## Quote from our National president Beth Roberts:

“Ultreya GB was an inspiration in the way so many Cursillo get-togethers are – fellowship, worship, challenge and encouragement in equal measure. Thank you to all those who organised, those who came, and those who prayed. You made it a wonderful occasion for all.”



**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.**



## Oxford Cursillo Facebook Page



# Come and join us!

If you read the latest edition of BACC Pages, the magazine of British Anglican Cursillo, you will have seen the banner headline "*Cursillo is all about personal contact.*" Others may suggest that Cursillo is about other things as well, but it is no accident that the Cursillo Library has a leaflet on personal contact.

But we live in a scattered world and in a large diocese, and as Oxford Cursillo goes through a period of transformation, it would be reasonable to ask how we are meant to do this personal contact!

This is where technology can come to our aid.

There's OxonFourth magazine, of course, which is always an absorbing read, and to which we can all contribute, arguably one of the best Cursillo magazines in the country. And then there's the Oxford Cursillo website. If you have tried, recently, however, you will probably have had difficulty passing 'go', something the Secretariat is working on. And a huge passing 'thank you' to Rev Kevin Beer who for more years than we can remember has been our 'webservant', keeping the page working, adding material, and making sure that it is up to date.

Even if the web site *were* working, however, it's only a one way street: something we can refer to in order to 'pull' information, but we can't use it to contribute, support each other and make known our thoughts and needs and joys. This is where the **Oxford Cursillo FaceBook** page comes in. If you are on FaceBook why not have a look? You can find it at

<https://www.facebook.com/Oxford-Cursillo-261576660562276/>

You can respond to some of the issues raised, put up your own post, share your experiences, or whatever, really. It may not be face to face, but it is certainly one way, among many, of doing personal contact!

*Matthew Caminer*



# A tribute to our late Queen Elizabeth II

By our Spiritual Director,  
Rev Andrew Foran

I write this article in the ten days of national mourning following the death of our late Queen Elizabeth. Much has been shared, said and written - nationally, internationally, and locally - about her long and faithful life, devotion and duty to our nation and Commonwealth and to her family. Tributes have been paid from all walks of life, from the senior members of society to the young. Many, like myself, have ever only known our dear late Queen as Head of State. At the time of writing, all are joining in various ways to mark their respects and pay their tributes. We have seen extraordinary public responses and displays never seen before. Motorways came to a halt and her Lying in State and Funeral made it the biggest security operation ever in London, to express our national sincere and heart-felt farewell to our Elizabeth.

## **The Sovereign and the Church**

Historians and Constitutionalists amongst us will of course know all about the unique and special relationship the Sovereign has with our Church of England. To those of us who don't, Queen Elizabeth had the titles of Supreme Governor of the Church of England and Defender of the Faith. The former is set out in the Articles of Religion, number 37, as found at the back of the Book of Common Prayer. In rather legalistic 17<sup>th</sup> century English it defines the Church's governance: "*The King's Majesty hath the chief power... unto whom the chief Government of all Estates of [the] Realm, whether they be Ecclesiastical or Civil...*" In other words, the Sovereign's Governance role is in the ordering of the institution of the Church to be able to go about its mission and evangelism in each and every generation. The Sovereign doesn't direct or command the Church, but makes appointments of Bishops and senior clergy after advice from the Prime Minister and from within the Church's structures. All ordained Clergy swear allegiance to the Crown at their ordination and again on taking up appointments. As former Prison Chaplain I recall swearing my allegiance much to the surprise but pride by prisoners on the two occasions of my two appointments.

Defender of the Faith has a long, interesting history. It was originally endowed on King Henry VIII by Pope Leo X before the Reformation in recognition of his devotion to the faith in the then Church of Rome. He kept the title at the Reformation. Every monarch since has inherited it, as King Charles III has now.

## **Queen of the Faith**

Our late Queen leaves a rich legacy as an active Defender of the Faith. She made no secret of her deep sense of faith. It increased as she aged. She was always ready to draw inspiration and stimulation from it and from the scriptures as we saw in her annual Christmas broadcasts. In her last one she spoke lovingly of the memory of her late husband the Duke of Edinburgh – the first Christmas without him. At the end of her speech, she very skilfully engaged the Christmas story and its meaning into a message for the unique Christmas that it was last year, coming out of the Pandemic:

“Young children...teach us all a lesson - just as the Christmas story does - that in the birth of a child, there is a new dawn with endless potential. It is this simplicity of the Christmas story that makes it so universally appealing: simple happenings that formed the starting point of the life of Jesus — a man whose teachings have been handed down from generation to generation, and have been the bedrock of my faith. His birth marked a new beginning. As the carol says, “The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight”. (@ BBC)

Our late Queen thus leaves us a similarly rich and full legacy to Cursillo as much as to the Church of England UK and globally.

In Benedictine spirituality there is the vow of *Stabilitas* - responsibilities and allegiance to location. It means being grounded and rooted, fixed on a firm foundation: faith. From that life is lived and explored. God has entered our *Stabilitas*, making his home with us as Creator and loving caring Father. He became one of us in his Son Jesus Christ, living the total experience of human life and of death too. God’s *Stabilitas* takes us through death and on to a glorious resurrection. And the *Stabilitas* continues with the Holy Spirit: God’s ability to ‘pop up’ and engage with us today - usually in the most unexpected places and circumstances. Our late Queen has left us the rich witness of her *Stabilitas* of faith in her loyal devotion and service of the Gospel in her duties.

## **Good and Faithful Servant**

In the Parable of the Talents, St Matthew chapter 25 verses 21 and 23 in the King James version the master praises the servant for his wise and creative application of their corresponding five and two talents in these words:; “*Well done thou good and faithful servant...enter thou into the joy of the Lord!*” May our late Queen Elizabeth II, our late Supreme Governor of the Church of England and Defender of the Faith, enter now into the same joy of our Lord.

The Elizabethan era is now over, and we begin to move on to that of King Charles-III. We pray God’s blessing on him to continue the example of his mother in living his life of faith.

## **God save the King!**

# Prayer Corner



Father in Heaven, this world is in turmoil, we are facing many upheavals, many things are uncertain, and we could easily become anxious as it seems that when we look around us, nothing will ever be the same again.

But one thing we can depend on is that You, O Lord are the same yesterday, today and forever. You are the strong tower and refuge that we can run to when the storms of life overwhelm us. This we thank you for.

We praise you for Harvest time, for our food, for friends and family who encourage us in our faith.

Father, as we look forward to celebrating Christmas, we give you thanks for so loving the world that you gave us your son Jesus, so as we believe and trust in Him we will have eternal life.

Thank you too, Lord, for your peace that passes understanding. The angels proclaimed "Peace on Earth" the night you were born, and as you returned to heaven you left us with your peace.

Peace not as the world gives but peace that passes all understanding.

What the New Year will bring we do not know, but we know you will never leave us or forsake us.

THANK YOU Jesus

Amen

## Prayer for our King

Father, we pray for King Charles as he takes on the role of being Head of State, that he will seek you and depend on your word as he follows in his mother's footsteps.

Bless him Lord and his whole family, as they grieve privately and publicly.

Give him strength Lord, may your word remind him to be strong and courageous as you, the Lord our God is with him.

God Save the King.

Amen.

# Dates for your diary

## Cursillo Leaders' Workshops

March 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> 2023: Wychroft, Bletchingly, Redhill

October 20<sup>th</sup> -22<sup>nd</sup> 2023: Wistaston Hall, Crewe

### For more information contact:

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**Thank you to all who have contributed to this issue of OxonFourth.  
The next issue is planned for the spring and items for inclusion  
should be sent to: [v.leeming05@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:v.leeming05@tiscali.co.uk) to arrive not later than  
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**Please contact me with ideas for articles well before this date.  
Telephone 01296 655342**

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