

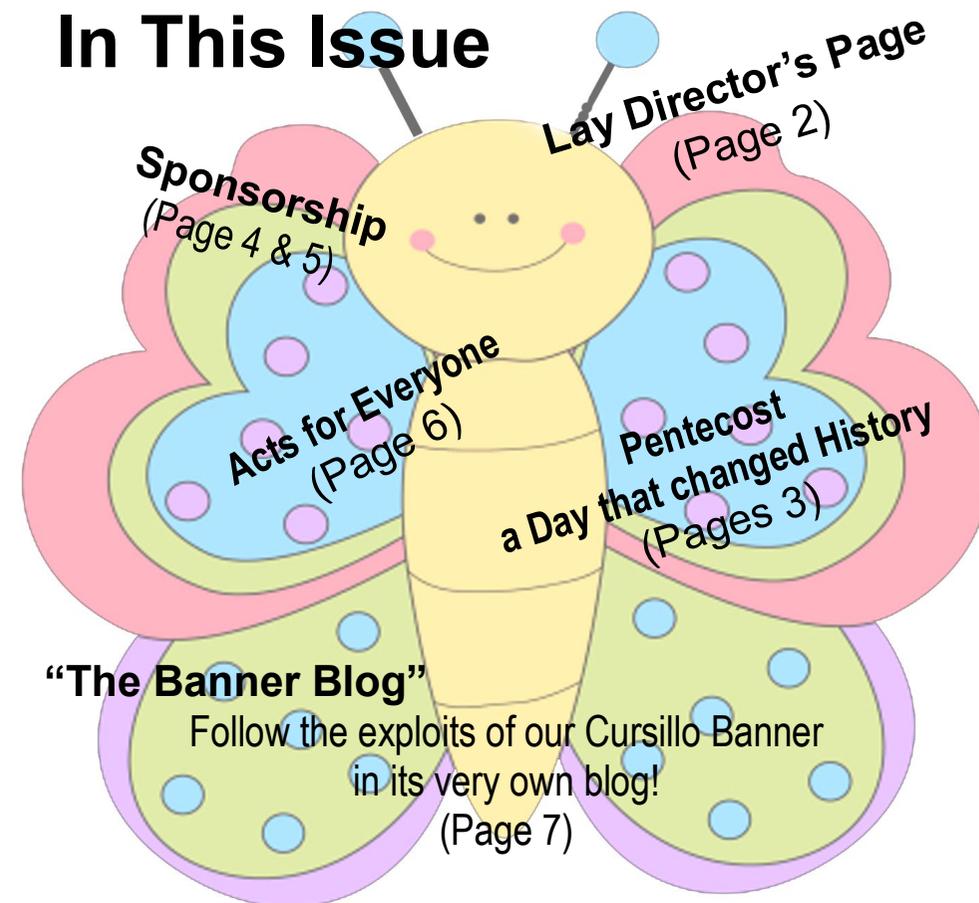
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<p>Please let Anne Smith know of any change of details, e.g. email address</p> <p>CHECK OUT CHESTER'S NEW WEB SITE: www.chestercursillo.org.uk</p> <p>BACC Newsletter is now on the BACC website http://www.anglicancursillo.co.uk/baccpages.html</p> <p>Affiliated with British Anglican Cursillo Council (BACC) - © Reg. US Pat. Office</p>	

CHESTER ANGLICAN CURSILLO®

Newsletter

Spring 2017

In This Issue



Future Events

- 24th June 2017 Diocesan Ultreya and AGM** 12noon for bring and share lunch @ St Peters Church, Elworth, CW11 3HU
- 2nd September 2017 National Ultreya** – Southwell and Nottingham. (Leaflets will be at the AGM) or see their website.
- 26th – 29th October Weekend #55** Prayers for Graham as he gathers his team together.
- 25th November 2017 Diocesan Ultreya** 12 noon for bring and share lunch, St Michaels and All Angels, Runcorn, WA7 5AS

Lay Director's Report

Welcome to our spring newsletter. I love this time of year, seeing the new growth on the plants and trees God created for us.

My favourite flower after winter is the snowdrop, it always amazes me that despite any hard winter and spring, the snowdrop always battles its way through.

Even when there is some of the toughest frozen earth it still battles through to give us a beautiful display of its delicate flower. I think this should encourage us in our Christian journey that we should persevere, and what rewards we will be given.

I found this on the internet about the snowdrop:

Garden of Eden: According to legend, Eve was distraught after God cast her out of the Garden of Eden. God sent forth continuous snow and the earth was cold and barren. As Eve sat weeping, an angel appeared to comfort her. The angel caught a snowflake and breathed upon it. The snowflake fluttered to the earth and gave birth to the snowdrop. This delicate bloom came to symbolize hope and rebirth.

Just a little light story but meant so much to me, walking home from Church one Sunday with my Grandchildren, Sam (who is 7 years old) said "Grandma we need to go home this way today". I tried to persuade him to go our usual way but he was insistent but wouldn't tell me why.

As a Grandma 'pushover' I relented and said OK!

They both took me down a path I didn't know about and about three quarters of the way down this off beaten track, we came across some undergrowth that was a blanket of snowdrops.

Sam just simply said "we saw them the other day Grandma and I told Mummy that I would bring you here because you love snowdrops"

Ultreya
Mary



Banner Blog

We have been to York since I last spoke. Yea! We travelled to York and stayed at the university until the next day, when it was so exciting because we travelled to the centre of York by bus then we did a walk of witness through the streets to the Minster.

What a wonderful witness! Singing and walking displaying with all my fellow Diocesan banners. People were coming out of the shops to watch as we went passed. If I had a face I would have been smiling as broad as Mary was, carrying me.

It was lovely as usual to be lined up with all the other banners throughout the service, just waiting to parade out again at the end.

My next outing was the special one being a part of the Chester Cursillo weekend. It was at Foxhill where Sue and Graham led the participants through a wonderful experience.



Vacancy

Please could I ask you to prayerfully to consider or talk to someone you think would fit the Secretariat positions that are up for renewal.

It may be that you read this and say I can't do that, but these roles are exciting and rewarding. You will shadow the existing officer for 6 months.

The positions that are becoming vacant are: Palanca secretary, Weekend coordinator, and Communications Officer.

Please if you are interested or would like to know about the role please don't hesitate to ask one of us about it.

Acts for Everyone

'Before Christ sent the Church into the world, He sent the Spirit into the Church. The same order must be observed today.' (John Stott). The event of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-13) sent the Church out into the world and its ripples are still being felt today. How can we experience the full impact of Pentecost in our own lives and churches?

The Spirit as Promise:

'When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place.' (1). The disciples were following Jesus' instructions to wait 10 days, 'Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised' (1:4). We, too, are unable to control God's Spirit, but we can trust His plans for our lives. Like the surfer waiting to catch the wave, timing is everything if we want to be used by Him.

The Spirit of Power:

'All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit' (4). Just as we are dependent on electric power in our homes, we need the Spirit to empower our lives. He produces the fruit of the Spirit in us, so that we can display the character of Jesus. He also gives us gifts, with which we are enabled to act and speak for Him. All Christians have the Holy Spirit, but not all Christians are filled with the Spirit! Paul encourages us to 'be (or go on being) filled with the Holy Spirit' (Ephesians 5:18). We are essentially filled with the love of God, in order to be emptied among the people, where God wants to use us to express His love.

The Spirit's Purpose:

The disciples 'began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.' (4). The Spirit empowered them to witness to all that God had done in their lives. As a result, all the different people were able to 'hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!' (11). Each one of us has a story to tell of what God means to us and it is the Spirit who translates this into the words people can understand as their own 'native language' (8)! At Pentecost, 3000 people were added to the church in one day! What are our expectations of what the Spirit can do today?

'Before Pentecost the disciples found it hard to do easy things; after Pentecost they found it easy to do hard things.' (A J Gordon)

Rev. Paul Hardingham

Pentecost - a Day that changed History

People call it 'Whitsun' because once upon a time it was a day for wearing white and going on church processions. The church, however, calls it 'Pentecost' and it's on June 4th this year. It is a crucial date in the Church calendar – in some ways the birthday of Christianity as we know it.

After the crucifixion the followers of Jesus took to meeting in an 'upper room' in Jerusalem, with the doors locked 'for fear of the Jewish authorities'. It was here that the risen Christ appeared to them several times, as well as on a few occasions in other locations when they ventured out. Eventually He told them that He was 'going back to the Father', but that they should stay in the city until they received the spiritual resources to do the job for which He had called them – to take His message to the world. They did as they were told, about 120 men and women, Luke tells us, including the mother of Jesus.

Then it happened, on the Jewish feast of Shavuot, which was 50 days after the Passover. Pentecost was a spiritual experience which transformed their lives. Emboldened, they emerged from the upper room and started preaching on the city streets. They continued to do so even when ordered to stop. What had happened to bring about this transformation? The answer was two words: Holy Spirit. If that sounds very elusive and vague, think of it in its basic meaning in the Greek of the New Testament: Breath – the very source of life itself, the most precious gift of God. At Pentecost the handful of believers were brought to new life because the Holy Spirit of God breathed upon them. The Church was born. Two thousand people were baptised. Wimps became witnesses!

Sponsorship

Are you looking around your church and thinking who can I sponsor on the next Cursillo weekend? Can I challenge you to approach it differently?

Sponsorship is a vital role in the Cursillo journey; it is so much more than getting people to fill the places on a weekend. First and foremost the sponsors role is to nurture their 'friend' from the first contact through the weekend and afterwards.

A sponsor should hold their friend in prayer to discern if Cursillo is right for them, they should tell them about the Cursillo method, how they use it in their own life. A sponsor should invite them to join a Group Reunion so that they can see the method in use and invite them to an Ultreya so that they can meet others who have experience of Cursillo. Then and only then, if they find a benefit in using Cursillo, should they be invited on a weekend.

Then it's up to the sponsor to tell their friend everything about the weekend, I know people worry about spoiling the surprises but believe me, when I say no amount of information can prepare someone for the effect God's grace can have on them at a weekend. I was told everything about a weekend, including the 'prayer messages' we would receive but I certainly didn't anticipate the palanca and the love that was shown to me on my weekend. The sponsor should talk to their friend's priest if possible or get their friend to, it's essential to have the parish priests support in Cursillo.

(Continued)

The sponsor's job is then to make sure their friend can get to the weekend venue and everything is sorted at home (the cat is being fed, the dog walked, the children picked up from school or whatever else they might need). Leading up to and during the weekend the sponsor should keep the team and participants in their prayers, and send palanca to their friend and others if they can. They should attend Wake up and the Clausura.

After the weekend it's important that the sponsor checks in with the new Cursillista to see how the weekend has affected them in case the experience has thrown up any questions or concerns that need addressing, it's not necessary for the sponsor to have all the answers but they should find someone who can help. Lastly it's up to the sponsor to ensure the new Cursillista has a group reunion to join and knows about the next Ultreya.

So instead of looking at potential participants for the next weekend, think who might find the Cursillo method helpful in their Christian journey or who is in a leadership position and might use it as a teaching tool.

In conclusion- Edward Bonnin, one of the founders of Cursillo, said:

“We do not have group reunions so that there will be people to attend Cursillo weekends, on the contrary we have Cursillo weekends so that there will be people to make group reunions.”