

“Father, I am seeking:  
I am hesitant and  
uncertain, but will you,  
O God, watch over  
each step of mine and  
guide me.”  
St. Augustine of Hippo



# UCM News

The  
Newspaper  
of the Union  
of Catholic  
Mothers

www.theucm.co.uk

Summer 2023



## Congratulations to His Majesty King Charles III on his Coronation on May 6th 2023 in Westminster Abbey

# MARGARET KERBEY RECEIVES THE BENEMERENTI MEDAL

**After Mass on the second day of the UCM National Conference at The Hayes Swanwick Margaret Kerbey was presented with the medal by Bishop Alan Williams SM.**

Margaret is a widow, has two daughters and two teenage grandchildren. A primary school teacher for over 30 years, with responsibility for Maths for most of that time.

Margaret has been an active parishioner of St Thomas of Canterbury Waterloo since moving into the parish 62 years ago and a member of U.C.M. (St. Thomas of Canterbury Foundation, Liverpool) for 35 years.

Within the parish she has been involved in Children's Liturgy, a Eucharistic Minister, a Reader, Catechist for First Holy Communion, and after a break during the Pandemic is still a Baptism catechist.

She has run the Parish "200 Club", and has counted, banked and recorded (for Gift Aid purposes), the collections each week. She is still the Recorder for Gift Aid purposes. Staffed the Parish office for a half day each week from 2008 till broken hip and lockdown 2020.

Foundation President for 3 separate terms of 3+ years over 2000 to 2018

From October 2003 till April 2017, she served continuously on the UCM Liverpool Archdiocesan Committee firstly as Study Officer, then Vice President and then Archdiocesan Treasurer from

2012 to 2017.

She represented our National President Mrs Margaret McDonald at the WUCWO General Assembly in Senegal in 2018.

Margaret has continued to work for the UCM tirelessly through illness, pandemic and a broken hip. Nothing stops Margaret; indeed, she has raised money for charity by abseiling from the Liverpool Anglican Cathedral. She has done this at least 3 times.

She also works in the community, regularly volunteers at the foodbank since its opening in 2013, except for a few months when she was physically unable to do so. She is a trustee (Treasurer), on the committee of the Waterloo Community Association. She is a governor of the parish primary school.

In 2007 together with representatives from the other parishes in her Pastoral Area, she set up a Pastoral Area Women's Group. she then served the group as Treasurer till 2014, when it sadly disbanded. She also represented the parish on the Pastoral Area Working Group, when this was operational from 2008 till 2012.

Margaret was warmly congratulated by all on her well deserved honour.

The Mass was celebrated by Bishop John Arnold, pictured below with concelebrants Bishop Alan Williams, Canon Lawrie Hulme, Fr. Bill Serplus and Fr Paul Edwards with Margaret.

**Jean Lopez Lopez National Media Officer**



Photo: Jean Lopez Lopez



Photo: Wikipedia library stock



Photo: Jean Lopez Lopez

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## Congratulations

### 80th BIRTHDAY

<b>Sandra Murray</b>	St. Ignatius Foundation	Ossett, Leeds
<b>Myrtle Murphy</b>	New Malden Foundation	Kingston and Merton, London
<b>Maureen Nugent</b>	New Malden Foundation	Kingston and Merton, London
<b>Joan Starr</b>	Sacred Heart & St. Peter Foundation	Wythenshawe, Shrewsbury

### 90th BIRTHDAY

<b>Sadie Carroll</b>	New Malden Foundation	Kingston and Merton, London
<b>Ann McGeever</b>	Holy Name Foundation	Middlesbrough, Past Diocesan President

### GOLDEN WEDDING

<b>Jean &amp; Thomas Naughton</b>	St Aelred's Foundation	York
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## Meet your new National Treasurer

Sue Bickerstaffe has been elected as the new Treasurer, learn more about Sue in our next issue.



## A timely but neglected

Source: April 11th 2023 ICN

**"Men nowadays are becoming more and more convinced that any disputes which may arise between nations must be resolved by negotiation and agreement, and not by recourse to arms." Sixty years ago today, Saint Pope John XXIII, as his life was drawing to an end, shared his encyclical *Pacem in terris*, on peace in the world, as a contribution toward the first steps towards disarmament and détente.**

The doctrine of a 'just war' was finished, and with great realism, the Pope from Bergamo warned of the risks of the new and powerful nuclear weapons. Sixty years later, that text is still relevant but sadly unheeded. Today we seem to have lost a full realization of how devastating a nuclear war would be - an understanding that was vitally present to those who were alive in April 1963. Today, the world is torn apart by dozens of forgotten conflicts, and a terrible war that began with Russia's aggression against Ukraine continues in the very heart of Christian Europe. The culture of non-violence is struggling to find its place, while many people seem to consider even the words 'negotiation' or 'talks' to be almost blasphemous. Even the idea of strengthening a world political authority capable of fostering the peaceful resolution of international disputes has given way to scepticism. Diplomacy appears muted, while war and an insane arms race are seen as inevitable.

And yet, despite this bleak picture, the principles listed by Pope John in *Pacem in terris*, continue not only to challenge consciences but are put into

practice daily by those who do not surrender to the inevitability of hatred, violence, prevarication, and war. They are witnessed by those 'artisans of peace' who today undertake their missions in Ukraine and in so many other parts of the world, often putting their lives at risk. They are witnessed to by all those who take seriously the words that Pope Francis spoke in the nunciature in Kinshasa when meeting the victims of unspeakable violence: "To say 'no' to violence it is not enough to avoid acts of violence. We also need to eliminate the roots of violence, greed, envy, and, above all, resentment." One must have "the courage to disarm the heart."



Photo by Jordy Meow on Unsplash

### Submitting copy for next issue

The deadline for articles and photos for the next edition of the UCM News is 28th October 2023

Please send copy to [ucmnews@yahoo.com](mailto:ucmnews@yahoo.com)

Thank you

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## Editorial

Goodness me it's been a busy time since the spring edition and it looks as though the Foundations are getting back into the swing of things again after Covid. With the coronation of King Charles III and a total of three bank holidays in May there has been lots of opportunities for visiting family and friends. Our National AGM in Swanwick was another opportunity to meet up with old friends and make new ones alongside discussions of the way forward for the UCM.

May I bring your attention to the article on the Benemerenti Medal presented to our National Treasurer Margaret Kerbey as she retires from her post after 5 years service.

Also the second part of the series 'Pilgrimage to Walsingham by bus pass'.

Looking forward to Walsingham in July and meeting more of you there.



Jean Lopez Lopez  
National Media Officer

## Pioneering survey of Catholics who have stopped attending Mass

Source: MBIT/ICN

**The Centre for Ecclesial Ethics at the Margaret Beaufort Institute (MBIT) is carrying out some pioneering research with Brentwood Diocese, into why many Catholics no longer go to Mass, or feel they no longer belong in the Church.**

Across England and Wales today it is estimated that at least two-thirds of baptised Catholics no longer attend Mass. There were approximately four million non-Church going Catholics in England and Wales in 2017 according to CBCEW statistics. Since the pandemic many more Catholics have not returned to Church with fluctuating patterns of participation elsewhere.

Bishop Alan Williams, in partnership with the Centre for Ecclesial Ethics at the MBIT says he wishes to listen and understand the stories and experiences of these women and men in Brentwood Diocese.

A research survey being issued this week is the beginning of an attempt to create a space for people to share their stories and experience, and to be seriously listened to by the Bishop and the wider church.

The MBIT states: "It is a sincere reaching out to those whom the Church has struggled to reach



during the synod process and expresses a desire by Bishop Alan in Brentwood diocese to listen more deeply, more widely and more humbly to Catholics whose experience and insight he wants to hear."

Are you a baptised Catholic who no longer goes to church, living in Brentwood Diocese, or have you lived there in the past? Bishop Alan would love to hear your story and listen to your experience. Do you, or someone you know, no longer go to Mass or feel that you belong in the Church?

**For more information and to respond to the survey see: [https://cambridge.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_9Gn08WXvvKfwJts](https://cambridge.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_9Gn08WXvvKfwJts)**

## Pope appoints new Papal Nuncio to UK

Source: April 2023 ICN

**Pope Francis has appointed His Excellency Archbishop Miguel Maury Buendia as Apostolic Nuncio to Great Britain.**

Born in Madrid on 19 November 1955, Archbishop Maury Buendia studied philosophy and theology at the Conciliar Seminary of Madrid before being ordained a priest for the Archdiocese on 26 June 1980.

He followed a two-year program of studies at the Pontifical Ecclesiastical Academy in Rome, and entered the Holy See's diplomatic service in July 1987, serving in diplomatic missions in several countries such as Rwanda, Uganda, Morocco, Nicaragua, Egypt, Slovenia and Ireland.

In 2004, he was called to the Section for Relations with States within the Secretariat of State of the Holy See. Four years later, in 2008, he was appointed titular Archbishop of Italica and Apostolic Nuncio to Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

Pope Francis appointed him Apostolic Nuncio to Romania on 5 December 2015, and to the Republic of Moldova on 25 January 2016.

He was appointed the Apostolic Nuncio to the Court of St. James's on 13 April 2023, filling a post

vacant since the previous Nuncio to Great Britain, Archbishop Claudio Gugerotti, was named prefect of the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches on 21 November 2022.

Commenting on the news, Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster and President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, said: "I welcome the appointment of Archbishop Miguel Maury Buendia as Papal Nuncio to Great Britain. On behalf of our Bishops' Conference, I assure him not only of our warm welcome but also of our full cooperation when he takes up these new responsibilities."



Pope Francis meets Archbishop Miguel Maury Buendia on 20 March 2023.  
Image: Vatican Media.



## FROM THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT

Dear Friends in UCM,

As I write this I am preparing for our National Pilgrimage to Walsingham in July, and we look forward to praying with "Our Lady of Nazareth" thinking of her part in the Holy Family which are in many ways similar as ours as mothers. We should follow her example of trust in God when there are difficulties.

I was privileged to attend the Southwark Arch-diocesan pilgrimage to Aylesford Priory on 20 May, it was a wonderful prayerful day when we were blessed with sunshine. Archbishop John delivered a very uplifting sermon with the theme of Hope and Trust in the Lord, let us take that with us as we celebrate 110years of UCM.

Some of your National Committee have been looking at ways to refresh and revitalise our wonderful organisation – more news to come. We hope and trust that through prayer there will be an upsurge of enthusiasm in old and new members

With my love and prayers

**Joan Hodge**  
National President

## Bishop Arnold presents interfaith environment pledge to Pope Francis

Source: CBCEW

**Pope Francis held a private audience with faith and civic leaders from Greater Manchester this week as they shared their commitment to caring for our common home.**

On Thursday 20 April, the region's faith and civic leaders attended a private audience with The Holy Father to discuss how Greater Manchester is tackling the climate emergency, and to make a formal commitment to working together to protect our planet and to care for our brothers and sisters around the world.

The delegation was led by the Catholic Bishop of Salford, Bishop John Arnold, and the Dean of Manchester, Rogers Govender, and also welcomed the Dean of Salford Cathedral, Canon Michael Jones, and the Head of Environment for the Diocese of Salford, Dr Emma Gardner.

In his address to the Pope, Bishop John reflected on the example Pope Francis has given to all faiths and none in shining a light on the climate emergency, saying:

"Holy Father, we thank you for your leadership in alerting the world's attention to the urgent dangers of climate change and the need for ecological conversion. Following statements of your predecessors, particular Pope St John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI, your encyclical Laudato Si' spoke not only to members of the Catholic Church but to all Christians and to all people of goodwill. It has been received and welcomed by countless millions of people, of different faiths and none. Through your appeal, we have recognised not only the damage we have done and which we continue to afflict on our common home but also the urgent need to repair and protect the wonders of our world, with its biodiversity and the complexity of creation of which we are guardians.

"In the Greater Manchester area, we are blessed to have a cosmopolitan and diverse community. That community is represented here by faith leaders from the Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu and Sikh faiths, by civic leaders and environmentalists, and we ask your encouragement and blessing for our commitment to work together to help all members of our diverse faiths to understand the catastrophe which faces our world and to make changes to our daily lives and routines. We cannot leave this complex problem simply to politicians or industry. As you have so wisely said 'each and every one of us has a part to play' in confronting this dilemma."

Also in attendance was Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham, The Lord Mayor of Manchester Donna Ludford, Bishop of Manchester David Walker, Gorton MP Mohammed Afzal Kahn, and Chair of the Manchester Climate Change Partnership, Mike Wilton.

Representatives from the Sikh and Hindu communities also joined the delegation, as well as Rabbi Robyn Ashworth Steen, from the Manchester Reform Synagogue, and city-centre Methodist Minister Rev'd Ian Rutherford.

The audience provided the cross-faith group with a rare opportunity to receive guidance and support from the Holy Father, as they discussed how faith can provide the foundation for a future of sustainability and fraternity, whilst learning more

about how the principles set out in Laudato Si' could guide our community in making this future a reality.

During his address, the Holy Father said: "Your united witness is particularly eloquent, since the history of your city is closely linked to the industrial revolution, with its legacy of immense technical and economic progress, together with an admittedly negative impact on the human and natural environment. It has become increasingly evident, in fact, that our present commitment to safeguarding God's gift of creation must be part of a broader effort to promote an integral ecology that respects both the dignity and value of each human person and acknowledges the tragic effects of environmental degradation on the lives of the poor. We need, in a word, to acknowledge that the environmental and social crisis of our time are not two separate crises but one (cf. Laudato Si', 139). Certainly, this demands the creation of new and far-sighted economic models. Yet it also requires a determination to overcome the "throwaway" culture of waste generated by present-day consumerism and by a globalized indifference that inhibits efforts to address these human and social problems in the light of the common good.

"Dear friends, your group is distinguished by its common witness to the intrinsically moral and religious dimension of our duty to protect the environment as a God-given gift calling for our responsible stewardship. Within your communities, and guided by the wisdom of your various traditions, you play an important role in contributing to a much-needed "ecological conversion" grounded in the values of respect for nature, sobriety, human solidarity and concern for the future of our societies. An essential aspect of this contribution is your commitment, as men and women of faith, to forming the minds and hearts of the young, and seconding their demand for a change of course and for farsighted policies that have as their goal a sustainable and integral human development."

Pope Francis was then presented with honey donated from both Manchester and Salford Cathedrals, along with a booklet detailing the joint commitments of the faith leaders, which included:

- Supporting the use of renewable technology and accelerating the decarbonisation of our places of worship
- Using our land to help heal nature and increase biodiversity
- Encouraging our communities to engage in proactive transformational behavioural change

The football-loving Pope was then delighted to receive an extra special Manchester gift: a Manchester United football shirt signed by Argentinian defender Lisandro Martinez.

In addition to this rare audience, the group also attended several other valuable meetings, including with Caritas International, the Dicastery for the Promotion of Integral Human Development, and Cardinal Turkson to further investigate different opportunities of working together.

This fruitful visit laid the foundations of a compelling partnership that offers our diocese and the Greater Manchester community a future of hope, working together in protection of our common home and our brothers and sisters here and around the world.



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# Half the Catholic dioceses of England and Wales have now divested from fossil fuels

Source: CBCEW

**The Diocese of Northampton has announced it is divesting from fossil fuels, meaning that half our Catholic dioceses have now divested.**

The diocese announced its decision, along with 31 other faith institutions from the US, UK, Australia, Canada, Italy and France, making their assets permanently off limits to fossil fuel companies.

Alongside Northampton, the Catholic diocese of Catania, Italy, will be divesting, as well as three religious orders, including the Carmelites, eight Catholic charities, a Catholic parish in Canada, seven Church of England dioceses, and many others.

Archbishop Giovanni Ricchiuti, President of Pax Christi, Italy, one of the divesting Catholic charities,

said: "The Pax Christi Movement joins the Fossil Fuel Divestment Campaign because it embraces the urgent message for social and environmental justice contained in Pope Francis's encyclical *Laudato Si'*."

"Each of us must do our part to reduce greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere, replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy sources.

"But it is also necessary to urge policymakers to quickly develop policies that will permanently replace energy production from extractive fossil [fuel] sources that, as we know, damage the climate of our planet and exploit entire populations."

Archbishop Ricchiuti's comments were echoed by Roberta Vincini and Francesco Scoppola,

Presidents of the Catholic Scouting Movement in Italy.

They said: "Disinvestment from fossil fuels is, first of all, for us Guides and Scouts, an educational choice. We want to care for our brothers and sisters who, in the exploited territories, live in the most painful conditions of poverty.

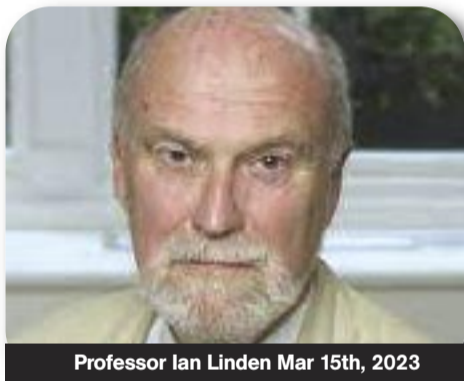
"We must live out the call of Pope Francis to change our lifestyle to defend our Common Home. We are already beyond the propitious moment to act."

Religious institutions manage a combined \$3trillion (£2.42trillion) of investments globally, and faith groups have divested from fossil fuels more than any other sector.



## Ian Linden: 'Lefty' Lawyers and 'Lefty' Popes

**The rule of law is the cornerstone of democracy. In Israel, the authoritarianism of Prime Minister Netanyahu and his extremist coalition partners seeking to appoint and curb the Israeli judiciary has brought more than 250,000 protestors onto the streets. In Britain, we seem less concerned about attacks on custodians of the law.**



Professor Ian Linden Mar 15th, 2023

Last week it was Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's turn to call Keir Starmer, the leader of the Opposition, 'a lefty lawyer'. It has become standard Conservative Party fare.

Between 2008-2013, prior to entering politics, Keir Starmer was Head of the Crown Prosecution Service and Director of Public Prosecutions. From 2010 to 2013 he was the main legal adviser to the Conservative-Liberal Democrat government. He was knighted in 2014. When in early 2020 he was competing to be leader of the Labour Party, Corbynistas worried that his politics were far from 'leftist'. 'Lefty lawyer' may be a handy alliteration but Sunak's language is further indication of the Conservative Party's continuing populist mindset.

Starmer is known in the legal world for his record on human rights. The 'McLibel' case, a challenge to freedom of speech over a leaflet denouncing different aspects of McDonald's corporate practice, is famous. After the case progressed through the British courts, Starmer in 2005 represented pro bono two environmental activists against the might of McDonald's in the European Court of Human Rights.

He was human rights adviser to the Policing Board of Northern Ireland and noted for his work - also pro bono - opposing capital punishment in several Caribbean and African countries. Is the promotion and executive enforcement of human rights law still being branded as 'lefty' repeating Boris Johnson's 'lefty human rights lawyers' attacks? By that token John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis qualify for abuse as 'lefty Popes'.

Presumably the Conservative Party is in the business of conserving. But it has become hard to believe that conservatism aims to conserve the key institutions of UK governance and our - unwritten - constitution. In an unusual moment of anger, the historian of government and broadcaster Peter Hennessy, less well known as the cross-bench peer Baron Hennessy of Nympsfield, described Boris Johnson in a BBC interview as "the great debaser in modern times of decency and public and political life, and of our constitutional conventions - our very system of government". Yet Johnson remains popular with the grassroots of the Conservative Party.

No Government likes the constraints imposed upon it by law but dismissing with taunts of 'fat-cat lawyers' (yes - once used by Tony Blair), or more dangerously 'lefty lawyers', subverts one of the institutions by which we are all protected. It is not so much that Sunak's playground jibes should be beneath his dignity as Prime Minister diminishing the respect he has gained for his diplomacy in Northern Ireland and Paris, but that such demeaning name-calling subtly undermines the law itself.

From where did we get the binary division of 'left' and 'right' now so entrenched in the language of politics? It dates from 1789 when the French King's supporters began sitting to the right of the President of the National Assembly with the revolutionaries to the left, though the occupants of the House of Commons benches can hardly be described in terms of royalists versus revolutionaries. Political Parties love binaries. The national argument about EU membership gave us Remainer/Remoaner v Brexiteer as well as 'the people' versus 'the elite'. More appropriately on a global scale we now speak of democracy versus authoritarianism.

Political Parties have problems putting 'clear blue water' between them. Johnson-style bluster, obliterating any nuance in different political visions within the Opposition plays to the back-benches and is amplified in social media and Sun, Express, Mail and Telegraph. The Opposition are then turned into a monolithic enemy. But today's political divisions are not adequately expressed by terms such as left versus right.

Right and left labels are even less appropriate when they are applied to religious believers. Catholics, for example, are held to be 'right-wing' if they hold pro-life, anti-abortion, views. Worldwide there are c. 1.3 billion Catholics, many of them may hold such views; this is a large number of people to designate as politically 'right wing'. They may, as well as being protective of life in the womb, also have a strong commitment to peace, elimination of capital punishment, trade unionism, the environment, and 'the preferential option for the poor' - including refugees and economic migrants. These views are

hardly right wing.

Just one individual example. Amnesty International was founded in 1961 and in its early years campaigned exclusively in support of prisoners of conscience. It later broadened its mandate to promote all the human rights enshrined in the 1948 UN Declaration of Human Rights. Between 2007 and 2008, under pressure mainly from their US section, a woman's right to choose was proposed as an addition to their UN 's list. The movement was split pretty evenly on the issue.

In response, the late Bruce Kent, an internationally known peace-campaigner, went to see Amnesty UK to ask them not to go down the road of adopting access to abortion as a human right (which Amnesty did unequivocally in 2018). He pointed out that two of the key founders of the organisation, Sean McBride and Peter Berenson, were Catholics, and the result would probably be the loss of Catholic members. Bruce as General-Secretary of CND in the 1980s had been a great supporter of the Women's Peace Camp resisting the placement of cruise missiles at Greenham Common. But, while very sympathetic to the concern for pregnant women's health and safety, he did not view abortion as a fundamental human right.

The 1980s were the last decade of the Cold War and CND was both under surveillance by British Security Services and infiltrated by them at Board level. So not right-wing but a dangerously popular 'lefty' then? Up to a point Lord Copper. There are few as courageous and honest as Bruce Kent but there are many others who do not fit into the crude political stereotypes that they are alleged to inhabit. You wouldn't guess that from the parliamentary Punch and Judy of Prime Minister's Questions.

Instead of answering questions with bluster and aggression, in a poor imitation of Boris Johnson, Rishi Sunak would do well to douse what Lord Hennessy called the 'Bonfire of the Decencies'. He described respecting those decencies as the 'good chaps' theory of governing. It needs to be revived if we are to conserve the best of Britain.

Rishi Sunak is promising that the Home Office's - in his words - 'Stop the Boats Bill' (the Illegal Migration Bill) will be unveiled within weeks and placed on the government legislative timetable. It is destined for the courts. This year, aspects of Suella Braverman plan to deport asylum seekers to Rwanda go before the Court of Appeal. We already have a sample of the Home Secretary's preferred language, a foretaste of how she hopes to deal with legal challenges. An email sent to Conservative Party members in her name blames "an activist blob of leftwing lawyers, civil servants and the Labour Party" for the failure to stop the growing number of little boats heading for Britain. We are yet to hear that her denial of any knowledge of the email being sent has resulted in anyone being disciplined or sacked for failing to get clearance.

We may be on the brink of a slippery slope. The Prime Minister should resolve now to respect our own Judges - along with solicitors and barristers - and to acknowledge their important role in a democracy, not least one whose constitution is unwritten.



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# Migrants and refugees are human beings not just statistics, says Bishop as Bishops' Conference releases new publication

Source: March 14th, 2023 CBCEW

**In 2023, people making dangerous journeys across the Channel to reach the UK are called by various names: 'refugees', 'asylum seekers', 'migrants', and often by more derogatory terms.**

Love the Stranger is a new publication by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales' Department for International Affairs that articulates our Christian duty to look beyond such labels and see the person who has left their homeland in search of a better life.

## Love the Stranger

Bishop Paul McAleenan, Lead Bishop for Migrants and Refugees for the Bishops' Conference, emphasises the need to uphold their innate human dignity:

"Our starting point as a society must be to recognise migrants and refugees as people. We need to understand their stories, their reasons for leaving their homelands and hopes for building a future here.

"We should never view people arriving from elsewhere as a political problem to be solved, but rather as brothers and sisters who we have a responsibility towards, and who greatly enrich our communities.

"People are driven to leave their countries, sometimes making dangerous journeys or risking exploitation, because of conflict, poverty, oppression, or lack of opportunities. Looking beyond our own borders, we have a duty to help people flourish in their homelands, as well as welcoming those who leave in search of a better life."

Cardinal Vincent Nichols, President of the Bishops' Conference, welcomed the publication:

"Love the Stranger draws together more than one hundred years of Catholic teaching to guide

our response to migration in England and Wales today. While it does not propose detailed solutions to complex problems, it clearly calls for procedures which permit safe and controlled access and a fair hearing to those seeking asylum. Present arrangements in this country are dramatically lacking in both of these requirements."

## Vatican endorsement

Father Fabio Baggio CS, the Undersecretary of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, praised Love the Stranger's rich review of, and reflection on, Catholic social teaching:

"The text promotes an authentic culture of encounter at all levels and among all the actors involved. As we live in times in which the defence of the dignity of each human person may seem under threat, Love the Stranger invites us to not give up on the opportunity to live our catholicity ever more fully, to build more just and equal societies for the benefit of each and every person, and to be open to the contribution that strangers can offer as we care for their integral human development and ours."

## Protection of migrants and refugees a shared goal

Fr Manuel Barrios Prieto, the Secretary General of COMECE (Commission of Catholic Episcopal Conferences of the European Union) welcomes the publication as an important step forward towards the promotion and protection of migrants:

"This advocacy document on the Catholic response to migrants and refugees is a timely reference and guidance in our polarised European societies. It offers sound orientations on migration and asylum not only for Catholics, but for any person of good who considers human dignity as the basis for a harmonious social coexistence. It is



not a mere compilation of principles of the Social Doctrine of the Church on the matter, but a reflection on how these principles should be applied to the current challenges faced by our states and societies."

Christine Allen, Director of CAFOD, the official aid agency of the Catholic Church in England and Wales, stresses that people have a right to flourish in their homelands:

"People around the world continue to be tormented by conflict, which drives them from their homes as they seek safety. Communities are also losing their homes and their livelihoods to a climate

crisis they did not cause.

"Working toward peace and tackling the climate crisis are the defining challenges of our time and we must show solidarity to those in need. The UK government can rise to these shared global challenges by reversing the counter-productive cuts to the aid budget, and prioritising countries impacted by conflict and climate change.

"Failure to act will mean people around the world continue to see their lives turned upside down and their homes destroyed by conflict and climate change."

## Events

2023 Autumn Officers Meeting is on Wednesday 18th October 2023 in the Grimshaw Room, St Chads Cathedral Birmingham.

## Notices

We still need a Diocese to volunteer as Host for National Council 2025

# WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2023

**I was approached by Joan Heffernan from Guardian Angels to see if we could hold the 2023 World Day of Prayer at St. Hilda's in Tooting on Friday 3rd March 2023.**

Now that we are three parishes, I was sure this wouldn't be a problem. Joan has successfully organized this service for many years at different churches in the Bury area. The 2022 service was held at Christ Church in Walmersley, just outside Bury. Joan invited ladies from many churches, around Bury, Whitefield and Prestwich to be involved this year. We had a group meeting and a practice at St. Hilda's the week of the service. Ladies from all the churches took part in the service. Joan invited Father Paul to read the meditation. I personally had not heard about the World Day of Prayer before Joan's invitation, but I am now so glad Joan encouraged myself and our UCM family from St. Hilda's to help and take part. Together in prayer celebrated 50 years in 1982, each year the service is written by women of a different country.

This year we celebrated the writing of Taiwanese women. "I have heard about your faith" The World Day of Prayer is a women led, global, ecumenical movement. We were part of a huge wave of prayer which started at dawn in Western Samoa and Tonga in the Pacific Ocean and finished in American Samoa. We did have many visual aids; a globe and an atlas came in very handy. Joan displayed a large map of Taiwan, a country much smaller than the United Kingdom. We had orchids which is the pride of Taiwan they have a worldwide reputation as "the Kingdom of Orchids" The service included many letters of encouragement from women in Taiwan who face suffering and injustice. Their stories focus on issues that are shared by women and children around the world. Protecting the environment, taking care of your family while teaching traditional crafts, continuing your studies even though your father would like you to marry,



working in a hospital during the Covid 19 pandemic plus many more. The hymns and responses, again chosen by the Taiwanese women, played on the organ by Pam Larkin, the response played by Pauline Roe on guitar, everything beautifully sung by the congregation. We played Taiwanese music before and after the service.

We then made our way to the church hall for refreshments. The Taiwanese pineapple cake was devoured by all. Thanks to our home bakers, we had a wonderful selection of sweet and savoury treats.

Joan and I both have the Together in Prayer booklet which highlights Taiwan and also shows where the National Committee distributes the charitable donations which are collected at each service. If you fancy a read, we can lend you the book. In 2024 the future theme is Palestine "I beg you bear with one another in love".

**Kim Fletcher President St. Hilda's Union of Catholic Mothers 2023 Salford Diocese**



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# Missionary sisters serving along the rivers of the Peruvian Amazon

**A consecrated religious of the Catechist Sisters of Jesus Crucified recounts the enormous challenges of evangelizing in the Peruvian Amazon region, which is geographically inhospitable but humanly very welcoming.**

**By Fátima Lay Martínez – Iquitos, Peru**  
I am a religious of the Sisters Catechists of Jesus Crucified, and I would like to share with you the story of our mission in the Peruvian Amazon, which began in 2017. In this small corner of the world,



which I call a "Gift from God", things do not work the way we were accustomed to, which is why it took a lot of creativity and time on our part to respond to the people's needs, to get to know them and to love them.

Our mission is made up of Sister Reyna, Sister María de la Luz, Sister Sandra, and myself. We live in Iquitos, the largest city in the Peruvian Amazon, surrounded by nature and large rivers. Nonetheless, drinking water is only available for about five hours a day, electrical power is unstable and Internet connection is slow. People arrive here from faraway villages and settle along the riverbanks in extremely precarious situations, accepting any jobs available, and not always well paid. But none of that keeps them from being joyful and friendly. I love to watch the children play and splash around barefoot along the unpaved roads.

The most common form of travel in the Amazon is along the river. There is only one road that connects Iquitos to the city of Nauta, which is 100 kilometres away. Other forms of transportation include motorboat, ferry and the so-called bongueros, which can take multiple days. In fact, distances here are more often measured in time than in kilometres. Lima is eight days away by motorboat, whereas it takes only one day to reach the border with Brazil or Columbia.

The Peruvian Amazon is a missionary land whose territory is divided into different apostolic vicariates, entrusted to religious congregations. But missionaries are few compared to the immense size of the forest. For instance, there are only 33 priests in our vicariate of Iquitos, which is why animators and we religious play an important role. As opposed to the other vicariates in the Amazon, most of the parishes here are in Iquitos, a city with about half a million inhabitants. But the Church's work also reaches communities in distant villages along the rivers, places that are not easily accessible due to their complex geography and high transportation costs. When the water level goes down, it is impossible to reach some areas, or, at least, it requires walking through muddy forests and protecting oneself from insects and other animals.

Our work in this context is to evangelize and accompany especially those who come from

faraway villages, carrying their dreams with them, above all for their children. I remember an early encounter with this pastoral reality which took place during a meeting regarding the sacrament of Baptism of some children. It was a great surprise for me to learn that only a few of their parents had been baptized. I experienced that situation as a sort of challenge, and I was forced to change the catechesis I had prepared. I slowly realized that this region is a "pristine land" for evangelization, given that many have never held a Bible or heard a passage from Sacred Scripture.

While living out our charism as a congregation throughout these six years, we collaborated on a variety of services for catechesis and formation in different parishes, in addition to being in charge of the Pontifical Mission Societies. All of this has allowed us to move from the city towards the peripheries and thus reach the communities settled in the river areas. There too, we had the opportunity to encounter and serve the crucified ones of today. On Wednesdays, we bring communion to the sick; we accompany them and listen to them.

I remember how, once, despite the disgust I humanly felt, I was able to contemplate Christ on the cross while tending to a person covered in wounds. Everything gained meaning in that moment. During the Covid-19 pandemic, I suffered alongside them [the people], and I cried because of the helplessness I felt in seeing so many people die during the first wave, which in Iquitos was devastating. This encounter with so many "crucified" ones also calls on us to give voice to the voiceless. Here there are many illegal tree-cutting and mining businesses. They cause oil spills which contaminate rivers, leaving people without drinking water and unable to go fishing for food. Faced with these situations, our love for the people keeps us from being indifferent and impels us to offer our small contribution to improve the situation. This is what spurred us to create Caritas in our parish.

Being in the forest is a gift from God, and although the world is unaware of our work, every effort to walk beside these people, to help them regain their dignity, is already a beginning of God's Kingdom. It is especially beautiful to have the opportunity to walk together with my sisters in the community on this search for what God wants.



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ARUNDEL & BRIGHTON DIOCESE

## St. Peter's Hove Foundation

On Tuesday 28th March 2023, three new members were enrolled into St Peter's RC Church UCM. The occasion was marked by 10am mass with much attendance and support from existing members, followed by coffee and cake in the church hall to celebrate their enrolment.

Our new members are Margaret Jones, Gabriel Lorimer and Ann Gallagher. Congratulations to them and we look forward to seeing them at our forthcoming meetings.

**Trish Colley St. Peter's Hove, Secretary**



## St. Peter's Hove Foundation A Very Fragrant Meeting

A new treasurer has been appointed for UCM, St Peter's Church, Hove, Anna Lin. She is pictured here with Claire Gwynn who coached the ladies in a flower arranging session on Tuesday 21st May. We were all able to take home our beautiful creations.

**Anna Lin Treasurer St Peter's church Hove**



## A&B Diocesan AGM



On Saturday 22nd April our A&B Diocesan AGM was hosted at St. Peter's, Hove Foundation. We arrived to find everything beautifully laid out and were warmly welcomed by their president Trish Longley and members.

We were pleased to have the National President Joan Hodge and former diocesan presidents and officers, together with visitors from the Catholic Women's League, National Board of Catholic Women and Chichester Mothers Union.

Sue Pertriz from A&B National Board of Catholic Women encouraged us to send in any points of shared interest for her monthly article in the A&B news.

Fr. Alexander Lucie-Smith of St. Peter's celebrated mass and his homily highlighted the many roles that UCM members do to support their parish and

community.

In the afternoon we had a talk by Fr. Aidan from Worth Abbey who shared with us his story of vocation. He is a Benedictine monk and has a great interest in community living.

Our president Anne Ager (in photo) thanked everyone for coming and she thanked the officers for all their hard work and support.

Our prayers were answered, Irene Harris MBE from Hove Foundation has stepped up for the role of President next year and we look forward to supporting her.

We would like to thank Hove UCM Foundation for their hospitality and for making us all feel so welcome. We departed in the sunshine feeling that it was a good meeting.

**Cecilia Thuy Cameron (A&B Media Officer)**

LIVERPOOL ARCHDIOCESE

## Trip to Knock

Maureen Finnegan our Archdiocesan President organised a trip to Knock as her Presidents pilgrimage.

At Knock the first day was just finding out about the history of Knock and apparitions and settling into the hotel where the accommodation was lovely as well as the food that was on offer.

Next day we went to visit Croagh Patrick where St Patrick fasted for 40 days then on to the lovely West Point then Ballintubber Abbey for a guided tour.

Day 3 we spent the day in Knock where we visited

the site where the virgin Mary appeared on the 21st of August 1887 to a group of local people with St Joseph and St John the Evangelist followed by mass at the Basilica. There was also a museum of the history of Knock and its people. The stations of the cross were in the grounds around the garden, we began with our UCM prayer, followed by Marys Way of the Cross. On the last night there was a sing along with a guitarist and we all had a great time.

**Maria Pimblett, Media Officer, Liverpool**



## Celebrating the King's Coronation

St Margaret Mary's Foundation had a wonderful time celebrating King Charles 111's Coronation. They threw themselves into patriotic decorations and no doubt food as well.

**Marie Pimblett Media Officer Liverpool**



BIRMINGHAM ARCHDIOCESE

## Celebration at St Peter's, Bloxwich

Eleanor and Mick Mason recently celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary and 80th birthdays with a lovely afternoon tea at a local hotel, organized by daughters Lynn and Sarah. They were joined by family and friends. Father Michael Puljic from Sacred Heart, Hanley and Father Chris from St Thomas of Canterbury Walsall came to see them which was lovely.

Eleanor being a long-standing member of U.C.M has held office as president and secretary in Wolverhampton Section and secretary of Birmingham Diocese. Eleanor is secretary of Wolverhampton Catholic Fellowship.

Also involved in fundraising for various charities and the church.

The couple asked for donations in lieu of gifts to go to Let the Children Live which supports The street children in Columbia.

Mick has been a long-standing member of The Knights of St Columba holding various office, also Eucharistic minister.

Giving his support to the church in various ways. Mick spoke about the importance of family and friends and this showed at the gathering of how much they are both loved.

He mentioned the late Mary & Dennis Tunley whom they had a great friendship with. Their three daughters were able to come.

A lovely couple and we wish every Blessing on them in their Diamond year and years to come. God Bless.

Angela Wyre, St Peter's, Bloxwich



## Kidderminster Foundation AGM

Kidderminster Foundation had their AGM in February, where they handed over a cheque for £555 to Father Douglas Lamb. As our fundraising project for the past year has been the parish maintenance fund. We raised this wonderful amount through, cake sales, craft sales, cards being sold, raffles and a big Spring Craft Fayre, where we sold tables to arts and crafts people from outside the parish.

Photograph - Miriam Cunliffe and Father Douglas Lamb with the cheque.

Miriam Cunliffe President Kidderminster Foundation



## Kidderminster Lenten Retreat

The ladies of Kidderminster Foundation enjoyed a lovely peaceful Lenten Retreat, on Saturday 4th March, we read from a booklet of the Stations of the Cross from Our Lady's point of view. Provided by Vice President Betty Martin, the retreat was led by the UCM. Our thanks to Father Lamb for the

beautiful service. Members of the parish joined us, the service was well attended. We read a list of deceased members and those in need of our prayers due to illness.

Miriam Cunliffe, President Kidderminster Foundation



## Our Lady's May Procession

On Sunday 14th May at 4pm, St Ambrose's in Kidderminster held their annual May Procession in honour of Our Lady.

Our very own Ann Harris, a long-standing member of our Kidderminster UCM foundation and parishioner of St Ambrose's Catholic Church, was given the honour of crowning Our Lady.

The service started in the church, then the statue of Our Lady was carried out by some willing volunteers of the parish. The procession came out onto the path alongside the Birmingham Road,

before continuing onto Leswell Street, then turning onto the carpark of the St Ambrose Parish centre. Eventually finishing in the rectory garden. All whilst the Rosary was recited by those in the procession as they walked along behind the statue.

The service ended with the crowning of Our Lady by Ann Harris, tea, coffee and cake were served afterwards in the Adams Lounge.

Miriam Cunliffe President Kidderminster Foundation



## St Marie's Foundation Rugby AGM

The meeting was attended by all 13 members. Our nominations for Officers have taken place and for the first time in many years we now have a President, Secretary, Treasurer and Vice President, who will take over as President at our 2024 AGM.

Our Blessed Lady certainly answered all our prayers.

The AGM was followed by a celebration for the 80th Birthday of one of our members Margaret Butler (centre of the front row) who had kindly provided refreshments for us to share her special birthday. A very successful meeting.

In 2024 St Marie's will be celebrating our 90th Anniversary and we now look forward to planning a very special event to commemorate this wonderful occasion. How wonderful is that?

Iris Edwards - Secretary



Submitting copy for next issue

The deadline for articles and photos for the next edition of the UCM News is 28th October 2023

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**SOUTHWARK ARCHDIOCESE**

## Sponsored Walk for CAFOD

Some of the Sheppey Foundation members taking part in a Sponsored Walk to raise money for CAFOD along The Leas in Minster. We raised over £250 for CAFOD.

**Joanne Pavitt, Diocesan Media Officer**



## South Norwood Foundation

On Mothering Sunday South Norwood Foundation organised a celebration of the UCM and a recruitment drive which resulted in 6 new members. They all had a wonderful day and enjoyed eating the delicious cake.

**Joanne Pavitt, Diocesan Media Officer**



## Leighton House Visit

In spite of an unseasonal snow shower on the morning of our outing to Leighton House in March, several members and friends of Sutton UCM braved the weather and had a lovely day visiting Leighton House just off High Street Kensington. This was the house and studio belonging to the Victorian Artist, Lord Frederick Leighton. It is famous for the beautiful "Arab Hall" furnished with tiles collected during visits to the Middle East. Many of his paintings and drawings were on display as well as some of his contemporaries.

**Maggie Carr Sutton UCM**



## Novelty Holders for Creme Eggs

The Ladies at the UCM in Walderslade made these delightful Novelty Holders for Creme Eggs this Easter Season. Our Craft Leader, Pat, prepared the sets for us and taught us how to stick them together at our meeting. We then went home and made more & more & more!! They proved extremely popular. We sold them for £1 each after weekend masses, and after several batch orders we made over £260!! Who would have thought it??

**Joanne Pavitt Media Officer Southwark**



**SHREWSBURY DIOCESE**

## 70 years as member of UCM

St. Peter's and St. Raphael's foundation Stalybridge, Tameside ,Greater Manchester. Mrs Teresa Cannings seen here with Mary Dearden Shrewsbury Diocesan President. Teresa became a UCM member 70 years ago when her mother bought her 1st year's membership of the then St. Peter's foundation in Stalybridge. The President attended the special meeting and presented Teresa with a certificate and cake made for the occasion.



## Shrewsbury Autumn Meeting

The Meeting was held at St Vincent de Paul church and Hall in Altrincham. This is the Parish of our Spiritual Advisor, Father Roberts Dykes. Although his parish currently doesn't have a UCM, the ladies of our Diocese find it a central point for us all to meet and we will continue to meet in Altrincham from now on. Although we have lost members due to Covid and others are no longer attending, a few of the Foundations have boosted their numbers which is great news.

LEEDS DIOCESE

## Leeds Diocese AGM

Saturday March 11th saw the Leeds Diocese UCM meet in Wheeler Hall (Leeds Cathedral) for its AGM. We were delighted that Jean Lopez-Lopez joined us as did Barbara Cookson from Middlesbrough Diocese. We were honoured to have Sir John Battle as our speaker and very inspirational he was too, speaking very highly of the UCM but reminding us of the words of our prayer "Make us understanding and caring to ALL experiencing difficulties and generous in support" - and - "Give us your Grace to recognize the path you are inviting us to take and the courage to respond \_\_\_"

Our Spiritual Advisor Canon Lawrie Hulme was looking the picture of health after his recent illness and full of praise for the NHS. Onward and upward! He did tell us that he is retiring at the end of the

summer but we are hoping he can remain with the UCM as he would be sorely missed. We have lost Foundations here in Leeds going from 188 members in 2017 to 74 (plus 12 Independent members) in 2022 BUT we do have a new and very vibrant Foundation - small steps etc! A couple of ideas came from the meeting - Could the UCM give more emphasis to Caring for the Earth as climate change is such a fundamental issue today? Maybe an Eco Officer?? Certainly, it could be an item on every meeting's agenda. Also, could we have a special person to call our Independent Members every so often as many are housebound and/or lonely? Here's to the next year and good times for our UCM.

**Sue Oldroyd Leeds Secretary.**

## Study Day

This year's Study Day was held at Wistaston Hall, an Oblate Retreat Centre in Crewe, Cheshire. The centre is a lovely old building set in very well maintained grounds so was a perfect setting for the UCM. Our 2 vice presidents, Monica Oval and Mariann French hosted the event which was based on Fratelli Tutti, a wonderful book written by Pope Francis. Over 30 members attended from all over the country, so it was a chance to put faces to the names that we know very well. We discussed the many ways we have of communicating with each other and how those ways have changed dramatically since technology now plays such a big part in our lives. Monica also pointed out that UCM is mainly about service and recommended how members can become more visible in the Parish. A very informative day thanks to our 2 hostesses.

**Eileen Goodwin Media Officer Leeds Diocese**

## Helping the Air Ambulance

As Yorkshire is the largest county in the country 2 Air Ambulances are needed to cover the huge area. The 1st ambulance base is in West Yorkshire and the 2nd in the North of the county. The cost of this operation is enormous but thanks to the hard-working charity the money keeps coming in. UCM at St. Ignatius In Ossett invited 2 volunteers from the charity to a fund raising evening in our

Parish. We were given a very entertaining talk, accompanied a film show, by 2 lady volunteers who have been fund raising for over 10 years. Thanks to the ladies selling Yorkshire Air Ambulance merchandise organising a raffle and providing refreshments they didn't go away empty handed. A lovely evening supporting a very worth charity

**Eileen Goodwin Media Officer Leeds Diocese**



## St. Benedicts Foundation

St. Benedicts Garforth held their 40th Anniversary on 15th February 2023. After a special Mass our members were joined by our Parish Priest, Fr. Phillip Hall, our Spiritual Director Canon Laurie Hulme Fr. Peter Rosser and members from our newest foundation St. Josephs

Castleford. We then enjoyed delicious cake and Prosecco. A lovely memorable evening.

**Janet Daniel UCN Foundation President**



HALLAM DIOCESE

## Youth Ministry travel to Calais

Appreciation has been expressed by Susan McDonald the Director of Youth Ministry to the Hallam Diocese for the support we have given her. In February 2023 she, together with a group of 6th formers from All Saints and McAuley Schools, as well as the Chaplain, the Director of youth and educators from Birmingham who lent their minibus travelled to Calais. Where over 200 beanie hats (knitted by UCM members and their friends) were distributed by Fr. Philippe who runs a community for refugees. The young people learnt about the plight of the refugees by interacting with them through games and other services such as tea/coffee and haircuts. Sue is most grateful for the contributions and fundraising to enable the youth of our Diocese to attend the Flame event and other activities. At the UCM Christmas Lunch in November 2022 over £200 was raised at the raffle which will help to subsidise the cost of the coaches. No doubt our UCM members were delighted to be of help to our youth.



## St. Vincent's Foundation

On Wednesday 17th May 2023 during the meeting of the Union of Catholic Mothers at St. Vincent's Church in Crookes, Sheffield, Dr. Caroline Anderson spoke to us about her work at Bluebell Wood, Dinnington, Sheffield. She is a music therapist and has worked there for seven years. Bluebell Wood was opened in September 2008 and cares for children, young adults and their families giving them respite and short, much needed breaks. It has helped hundreds of children from across South Yorkshire, Derbyshire, North Nottinghamshire and parts of North Lincolnshire. Support is given to parents and their siblings, and particularly during the last moments of their child's life. Over the years donations have been vital to help pay for day trips and to fund sessions of sensory play. The St. Vincent's Foundation of Catholic Mothers were delighted to give Caroline a cheque for £520 for Bluebell Wood, as the Easter Donation from the UCM members and friends of the Parish.

**Dorothy Anderson, Media Officer for the Hallam Diocese**



MIDDLESBROUGH DIOCESE

## 90th Birthday Celebrations

In March, one of our longest serving members, Ann McGeever celebrated her 90th Birthday. Our members joined her in a birthday afternoon tea with wine. Ann was delighted when Jo Allan who is our oldest member at 101 years old, arrived to wish her a HAPPY BIRTHDAY! Ann is on the right and Jo on the left in the photograph.

Kath Stubbs Diocesan Media Officer



## Coronation Party

The Holy Name of Mary Foundation held a Coronation Party. We invited members and friends to bring party food to share and our spread was fit for our new King, Charles III. We had a quiz about the royal family and enjoyed time together.

Kath Stubbs Diocesan Media Officer



## Visit to Thicket Priory

Members of St. Aelred's Foundation, York had a wonderful evening with the Community at the Carmelite Monastery at Thicket Priory. Mass was celebrated by Fr. Bill Serplus and the music led by Sister Rosemary and Sister Therese. Following Mass, refreshments were enjoyed by everyone, we always have for a good chat and update with the members of the community as to what is happening with our families and in the parish. Thicket Priory is a few miles outside York, an evening which is always looked forward to and well attended by our members.

Kath Stubbs Diocesan Media Officer



## Visit to Bar Convent

In February this year St. Aelred's Foundation visited the Bar Convent which was founded in York in 1686. We were delighted that Canon Michael Loughlin was able to be with us for the Celebration of Mass in the wonderful chapel which has continued to be used throughout the centuries. The relic of St. Margaret Clitherow is housed in the chapel. Following Mass, we had an excellent lunch in the beautiful Victorian Atrium.

Kath Stubbs Diocesan Media Officer



## Cycle Ride

Many of you will recognise Fr. Bill Serplus from Council Meetings as the Spiritual Director of the UCM for the Middlesbrough Diocese but many of you will not have seen him preparing for a cycling challenge. When Fr. Bill heard that a group of cyclists from Guisborough were hoping to do a 113-mile Sponsored Cycle Ride to raise money for Christian Aid, as a keen cyclist, he was very interested especially when he learnt it was touring historic abbeys in North Yorkshire. This included Rievaulx Abbey, a great favourite of the parishioners of St. Aelred's. St. Aelred was the Abbot, great writer and spiritual leader of Rievaulx Abbey. Saturday the 20th of May after just a few weeks training, trepidation and much

encouragement from friends and parishioners the day arrived, and the sun was high in the sky the ride began. The biggest climbs up to the turn off for Rievaulx were early on but Fr Bill's biggest struggle came midpoint climbing up to Fountains Abbey near Ripon. He had never ridden over 56 miles, and he ran out of energy. The other ten super fit riders encouraged and guided him to the rest stop and a welcome fuel restock of flapjacks and water! Re-energised, the rest of the ride, except for one puncture, was a straightforward ride through beautiful rolling countryside of North Yorkshire. A welcome Guisborough Priory beer was a just reward for an eleven-hour ride! Phew!



## Rosary Rally, Filey

Members of Filey and Scarborough Foundations held a joint Rosary Rally on Saturday 13th May at St Mary's Church in Filey. The day began at 12 noon with Holy Mass, celebrated by Fr Albert Schembri. Several of those who attended described the day as 'beautiful' and commented

on the deep sense of prayerfulness and devotion to Our Lady. It was lovely to see so many parishioners, as well as UCM members from both foundations, attending and supporting the rally. It was a day of unity and friendship, from beginning to end.

## Bob Lavery Tour

One of our own parishioners Bob Lavery who had the honour of being one of the two drivers who transported the relics of St. Bernadette during their UK tour came to one of our meetings to tell us of the amazing experiences. There were 52 venues on the tour which lasted 66 days, including Cathedrals, Parish Churches, the Scottish National Shrine at Carfin, several Monasteries, Convents, a prison and schools. Some 164 years since St. Bernadette experienced the apparitions at Massabielle continues her mission today. Many people who visited the relics also reflected on the possibility of making a pilgrimage in the future or reminisced of previous pilgrimages. The tour had been well received throughout the countries.



WESTMINSTER ARCHDIOCESE

## Celebrating the Coronation

Celebrating the coronation at their meeting on May 3rd at is The Sacred Heart of Jesus and St. Joseph. All the foundation's ambulant members were there and had as their guests' ladies who had visited at Foundation meetings or helped at fund raising ventures. A wonderful time had by all, thanks to Jean McAleer for the photograph.

Jan Woodford Westminster Media Officer



## Justice and Peace Talk

At the Westminster Diocesan AGM, held in the hall at Rosary Church Marylebone. Colette Joyce, Justice and Peace Administrator for the Diocese, sitting centre in photograph, gave an interesting talk on Justice and Peace Issues. Iona De Souza retired following a marathon stint of five years, due to COVID, as Diocesan President. Her successor Rosemary Parsons (in pink front row) was welcomed as the new President, together with Sister Brigid Collins (Secretary) and Joan Deagan (Treasurer) take over the reins following the AGM. Following the meeting and Mass a shared lunch was enjoyed by everyone.

Jan Woodford Westminster Media Officer



## Three New Members Enrolled

Homerton Foundation in East London held a Mass in the Homerton Parish Church of The Immaculate Heart of Mary and St. Dominic to enrol three new Members. The Diocesan President Iona de Souza was present. They held a small reception afterwards. Don't they look great in their "UCM uniform".



Jan Woodford Westminster Media

## Westminster

Sr. Brigid, Westminster UCM Diocesan Secretary, was one of a group gathered by Cardinal Vincent, who represented Westminster, to meet King Charles prior to the coronation at the King's request; photos with the King were not allowed

Jan Woodford Westminster Media Officer



## Annual Mass

Westminster Diocese Annual Mass held at The Rosary Church, Marylebone celebrated by Canon John O'Leary Rector of Allen Hall Seminary (on Right) and Father Michael Johnstone Diocesan Spiritual Advisor (on Left), pictured with 11 Members who received long service certificates.

- |                     |                                      |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Bridie O'Gorman     | West Drayton foundation – 50 years   |
| Marie Murphy        | West Drayton Foundation – 50years    |
| Ann Hawkins         | Whitton Foundation – 40 years        |
| Kay Corey           | Whitton Foundation – 35 Years        |
| Joan Deagan         | Whitton Foundation – 35 years        |
| Cecelia Brooks      | Whitton Foundation – 35 years        |
| Moirá Cross         | Whitton Foundation – 35 Years        |
| Mary Fogarty        | Whitton Foundation – 35 years        |
| Susan Liber         | Whitton Foundation – 35 years        |
| Sue McGuinness      | St John's Wood Foundation – 20 Years |
| Christina Breatanie | St John's Wood Foundation – 20 years |

EAST ANGLIA DIOCESE

## Statue of Our Lady Crowned

It was with great joy that a member of St Joseph's foundation crowned the Statue of Our Lady in the ancient Marian tradition. The service was led by Fr Tibor with prayers followed by a decade of the Rosary. A barbecue followed attended by people of the parish.

Ann McDormott, St. Neots foundation President



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NORTHAMPTON DIOCESE

## Hardy pilgrims rest in Kettering

Members of St. Edward's Kettering Foundation were very pleased to once more welcome the young pilgrims of Pilgrimage Cross (formerly Student Cross) to rest in our church hall and be 'fed and watered' at the start of their week-long 120-mile Easter pilgrimage to Walsingham, culminating on Good Friday. They came from all over - a contingent from Leeds, another from Brighton and some even from Germany.

And what a good job they were able to enjoy 'cuppas and hot suppers on their arrival, since the weather was cold, windy and the rain was lashing down, which we all hoped would not be a precursor for the next seven days.

They went on their way the following morning after mass celebrated by their chaplain, Fr. Paul Wilkinson, and a hearty breakfast to keep them going until their next stop.

As ever, we much enjoyed the pilgrims' cheerful company and greatly look forward to hosting them again next year.

From right to left in the picture

Middle row (standing) first and second left: St. Edward's Parish Priest, Fr. Gregory Marchwinski and Margaret Anderson. Sue McGrenaghan is second from the end on the right (standing).

**Margaret Anderson, Media Officer, Diocese of Northampton**



## Lunch at the Stirrup Cup, Barton

Friday, 3rd February, St. Edward's Union of Catholic Mothers enjoyed a lovely lunch at the above restaurant/pub. Thirteen members took the opportunity of getting together and exchanging news and updates 'within and without' our circle. An unexpected guest arrived in the person of our Parish Priest, Father Gregory, which added to the enjoyment of everyone. Of course, the food was very good too!!

**Anna Roberts (Member, St. Edward's Kettering Foundation)**



## Outing To Chippenham Park

Tuesday, 28th February, St. Edwards Union of Catholic Mothers spent a wonderful day meandering among the snowdrops and aconites in this lovely park. The park itself dates back to the end of the 17th century and has had numerous landowners since that time, originally there being a Dutch influence. It lies between Ely and Newmarket. The present day gardens are laid out encompassing informal borders, woodland walks and an enchanting lake surrounded by very easily accessible pathways with convenient seating dotted around. The sight of hellibores, daffodils and numerous spring bulbs are a delight together with the swathes of snowdrops and aconites.

Although the end of February, the rain held off and the chill of the wind also. Several of the members spent some time in the cafe, warming themselves with hot soup and taking a welcome 'hands on' beside the burning log fire.

It had been an early start, 8.00 a.m. with an arrival home at around 6.00 p.m. A long day and a very eventful one.

**Anna Roberts (Member, St. Edward's Kettering Foundation)**



# Papal blessing for Julian of Norwich 650th celebrations

Source: ICN

**Pope Francis has sent a message of blessing to all participating in the events marking the 650th anniversary of the Revelations of Mother Julian of Norwich, the medieval mystic and anchoress.**

The Bishop of East Anglia, the Rt Rev Peter Collins and Anglican Bishop of Norwich, the Rt Rev Graham Usher, were delighted to receive the Papal blessing for Julian of Norwich 650th celebrations, were delighted to receive a message from Pope Francis last week. It was read to the congregation at a special anniversary service in Norwich Anglican Cathedral on Sunday, May 14.

In his message, Pope Francis speaks about Mother Julian's "profound significance" and how her words can bring consolation and strength to "all who face the pressing challenges of war, injustice, ecological disaster or spiritual poverty".

Echoing words used at the Coronation of King Charles III, the Pope expresses his hope that through a greater appreciation of her life Christians will "follow ever more faithfully and joyfully the example of Jesus, the one who came 'not to be served but to serve'".

Bishop Graham and Bishop Peter, in an ecumenical gesture of their friendship and partnership in the Gospel, said in a joint statement: "We are very grateful to Pope Francis for his blessing and his generous message about the significance of Mother Julian's writing, not only for this fine city of Norwich, but in its contemporary relevance for all people. As we mark the 650th anniversary of her Revelations, and enjoy a series

of events and pilgrimages based around her Shrine in Norwich, we are delighted that Catholics, Anglicans and Christians of other denominations, will be coming together to pray and be inspired by Julian's life and witness to God in Jesus."

The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby said: "I am delighted to send my greetings for the celebrations of the 650th anniversary of Mother Julian's revelations. I am sure she never foresaw the extraordinary influence and inspiration she would provide for generations of Christians, and especially for women. I'm glad that her shrine is honoured and maintained today, and pray that it will continue to flourish. I wish all of you well for the celebrations."

**Full text of Papal message:**

I was pleased to be informed that over the course of this year, pilgrims from across the world are gathering in the Catholic and Anglican cathedrals of Norwich to mark the 650th anniversary of the "Shewings" of Mother Julian of Norwich, and I send the assurance of my spiritual closeness to those taking part in the various ecumenical celebrations.

The profound significance of this English mystic for the Christian tradition speaks to us from across the centuries and is increasingly being acknowledged and celebrated. Indeed, her maternal influence, humble anonymity, and profound theological insights stand as timely reminders that faith in God's loving providence and holiness of life expressed in generous service to our brothers and sisters in need, are timeless truths underpinning not only the life of Christian



discipleship but the very fabric of a just and fraternal society.

Of particular note is Julian's generosity in welcoming those who sought spiritual counsel and encouragement. This willingness to sacrifice self-convenience for the sake of others is especially needed in responding to the endemic problems of isolation and loneliness felt by so many in the more materially affluent nations of the world. In this regard, it is my hope that through a greater appreciation of the life of Mother Julian, Christians today will be encouraged to follow ever more faithfully and joyfully the example of Jesus, the one who came "not to be served but to serve" (Mt 20:28).

How vital, too, for today's world, is the message of God's mercy and compassion revealed to Mother Julian. In her Revelations of Divine Love, we learn that she was taught through God's grace that, despite the presence of evil in our midst, "all manner of thing shall be well" (Chapter 32). In this regard, I pray that all who face the pressing challenges of war, injustice, ecological disaster or spiritual poverty, may be consoled and strengthened by these enduring words of wisdom.

To all those participating in the commemorative events, I willingly impart my Blessing, as a pledge of Almighty God's tender mercy and compassionate love for all his children.

**Rome, Saint John Lateran, 8 May 2023**

# Pilgrimage to Walsingham by Bus Pass

Mary Sample

18th October 2021 Part 2

## Day 2

**Before I made my way to the bus station I had a little wander about the very compact centre of the town. Although it is mostly known for the race-course, which attracts a lot of visitors, Uttoxeter has several interesting attributes.**

Uttoxeter saw the last major royalist surrender of the English Civil War, when on 25th August 1648, James Hamilton, the first Duke of Hamilton, surrendered to the Parliamentarian General John Lambert.

Samuel Johnson, the Dr. Johnson of Dictionary fame, was born and brought up in Lichfield – not too far away. His father owned a bookshop and had a bookstall in Uttoxeter Market. On one occasion, young Samuel refused to work on the stall but later came to regret his obstinacy. He went to Uttoxeter and stood all day in the rain, without a hat, to do penance for his disobedience. There is a monument to this event in the market square and a street named after him. On my way to the bus station I passed by the beautiful Anglican parish church of St Mary the Virgin which is famous for its peal of 8 bells – something a guest in a nearby hotel once complained bitterly about!

The previous day's travel had been straightforward – I wondered if my luck would last. The bus station was simply half a dozen bus stops hidden behind a row of shops. I had noticed how few people were using the buses. The ones I had used so far were almost empty except in the town centres of the pottery towns. Those using the buses on the other parts of the routes were generally the elderly or, occasionally, a mother with small children. It struck me that these would be the hardest hit if the buses were to be withdrawn.

## Uttoxeter to Burton on Trent

The next part of my trip was more complicated. The only way I could achieve my destination was by co-ordinating a variety of buses with enough time to allow for hitches and comfort breaks. The first phase was from Uttoxeter to Burton on Trent. When I got on the bus at about 9.30a.m. I was the only passenger until I was joined by a lovely lady of a certain age called Maria. She was taking herself out for a day in Burton as a little treat. Since her mother died she lives alone in sheltered, supported accommodation and does voluntary work with disabled people. We chatted for a while and then she excused herself and spent a good part of the rest of the journey trying to unravel the complications that the DWP were making for her regarding her missing support payments. I was amazed by her patience and good humour despite what must have been a gruelling and frustrating conversation. Once again I was witnessing, first hand, the reality of people's lives.

When we arrived in Burton I nearly had a nasty mishap. According to my plan the next of my buses would intersect at the railway station. Unfortunately, the bus did not stop there – I should have been more attentive and rung the bell. I realized I had to get off and did so in the town centre. I asked for directions and got a bus back up to the station with plenty of time to spare. I didn't know whether to laugh or cry when I found myself travelling back to the very spot where I had left the Uttoxeter bus.

## Burton on Trent to Ashby de la Zouche

I had heard the name many times but had never been to Ashby de la Zouche. Once again the bus was not very busy after the Burton folk had left and the town centre receded. We passed through Swadlincote, once a mining town. Now it has a forward-looking visitor centre with special attractions for those interested in the industrial heritage of the East Midlands. Its proximity to the Peak District and the National Forest makes it a favoured tourist centre. The mining landscape of slag heaps and pits has been transformed into grassy parkland giving the outskirts of the town a pleasant and attractive character. It seemed like no time at all till we reached Ashby.

## Ashby de la Zouche to Loughborough via Coalville

Once more I met with a slight hitch! The bus was meant to deposit me on the main street in Ashby from where I would connect with my next bus. However, the bus was not able to turn into the main street because the road was blocked off. I had to find my way around some passageways, guided by helpful fellow passengers. Then my dilemma was – which was my bus stop and on which side of the street? I had a bus stop number to go by but was completely flummoxed about which way to turn. I was also conscious of the fact that this connection was tighter on timing. No need to worry! I stood looking bewildered at a bus stop and just appealed to anyone who was there, "Please can anyone help me to find the bus stop for Coalville?" I was immediately surrounded by kind and helpful folk who were most concerned that I got my connection. When buses only go once an hour it's quite a big deal! As it happened the bus was due and so I was escorted over the street to the correct stop and got there just as the bus appeared. It was so touching to have these marvelous folk wave me off like old friends!

Coalville was only 15 minutes away and I had planned to have my comfort break here while waiting for the Loughborough bus. I found myself in a town square dominated by a huge clock tower. From there I could cross into a shopping mall with all the usual chain stores and a few unique local shops. I chose to have my comfort break in a large but very well patronised coffee shop – I had a little giggle at its name *Insomnia!* I thought, "Their coffee must be good and strong!" I was



truly impressed by the care taken by the cafes I had visited to maintain the safety precautions – we were still under Covid restrictions although the lockdown was over.

What I didn't realize at the time was that Coalville is the location of Mount St Bernard's Abbey – a Cistercian monastery where they have started to brew an up-market beer called Tynt Meadow. There was a BBC 4 programme called "Brotherhood- The inner life of monks" which documented the venture. Sadly, the series is no longer available on iplayer but there are some films on YouTube about the monastery. Coalville must have been a magnet for monks because, as we were leaving the vicinity, we passed by a most interesting ruined Abbey, called Grace Dieu, which has a fascinating history and has survived in other guises.

When my bus was due I headed for the bus stop and waited there with several others. After a while we began to get a bit nervous – the once hourly bus hadn't appeared. I spotted one bearing our bus number on the other side of the square and, after a bit of discussion and a lot of hesitation, I decided to head for this bus. When I got to it I saw two elderly ladies standing at the door of the bus and they were giving it "the banks" to the poor bus driver who looked shell-shocked. He was trying to explain why the bus had been redirected but they were not having it! I had sympathy with them because there should have been a notice to point out the change of bus stop. I politely asked him if this was indeed the Loughborough bus and might I get on, at which, the furies turned on me and I was told in no uncertain terms that they were first and I should wait my turn. By this time, the others from the abandoned bus stop had joined me so all was well. Loughborough was not too far away and by 1.30pm I was able to find a pleasant café for my lunch. Loughborough was a bustling and fairly prosperous looking town. It was market day and the main streets were alive with market stalls and shoppers. Although the town centre gives the appearance of a small market town, Loughborough has one of the top ten research-led universities in the UK with a student population of 19 and a half thousand.

## Loughborough to Oakham via Melton Mowbray

My bus to Melton Mowbray was due within the hour so I didn't linger once I'd had my lunch. The journey took about 45 minutes and then I had another 45 minutes to spend in Melton, the home of the famous pork pie! I'd hoped I might be able to get one and perhaps have it for lunch the next day. I trudged the length and breadth of the town and couldn't find anything resembling a pie shop. If you go to Bakewell you can't stir for Bakewell Tarts but in Melton Mowbray pies are a hidden gem.

Anyway, I had a lovely cuppa in a quaint tea shop with a very affable proprietor then went to find my bus stop. While waiting, I was joined by a chap who was also going to Oakham. We started to chat and he told me the pies are sold only in butchers' shops. He was a bit of a gloomy character and seemed convinced that we'd be lucky if the

bus turned up at all. You can imagine how this bucked me up! The last leg of the day's traveling and this is all I need! However, bang on time, the bus came hurtling round the corner and I was soon safely on board. The countryside we passed through was beautiful and, once more, the weather was glorious. I was really glad that I'd decided on taking the slow lane and was able to appreciate the landscape, the autumn colours, the trees and clouds. It was truly uplifting.

Oakham is another neat and compact small town. Surrounded by a pastoral landscape, it is a delightful place. I can't remember hearing of it and I certainly hadn't been to that part of the country before. The journey made me think of the line in Blake's "Jerusalem" about England's green and pleasant land.

Very close to the bus terminal I found my hotel, The Wisteria. I'd been told it might be a bit – not exactly shabby – but careworn perhaps. In fact, it must have been given a complete make-over because everything was pristine. As I booked in the young receptionist made polite and friendly conversation and asked me about my visit to Oakham. I explained that my stopover was part of my solo pilgrimage to Walsingham. She looked completely baffled so I explained what a pilgrimage entailed. When I told her I was traveling on my pensioners' bus pass she was fascinated. Later, when I went for my dinner, I discovered that my exploit had been broadcast round the staff and they were all eager to wish me well on my journey. I felt quite the celebrity!

Next morning, as I walked through the town to the bus station to catch the bus to Stamford, I thought I'd really love to return and spend some time in the old county of Rutland. What a pity these old county names have gone! There is so much to see and enjoy in this region and I knew nothing of it before.

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# OBITUARIES

## LEEDS DIOCESE

**Jessie Russell** St.Benedicts UCM Garforth  
**Mabel Donnelly** St.Benedicts UCM Garforth

## MIDDLESBROUGH DIOCESE

**Mary Grainger** Holy Name Foundation Middlesbrough

## NORTHAMPTON

**Eileen Walsh** St. Edward's Kettering Foundation  
**Janet Manning** (Sister Margaret) St. Francis of Assisi Shefford Foundation

## PORTSMOUTH DIOCESE

**Margaret Campbell** Windsor Foundation  
**Pauline Kaznowski** Past President Cosham Foundation and Diocesan, Media Officer  
**Angela Gilmore** Past President Portsmouth Diocese  
**Trudi Allen** Corpus Christi Wokingham Foundation  
**Pat Hall** Corpus Christi Wokingham Foundation  
**Eileen Mason** Past President Wokingham Foundation

## WESTMINSTER ARCHDIOCESE

**Mary Brady** Independent Member

## Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord

Your memories linger, Your smile that cared, Your listening ear Your goodness shared. In God's deepest love. In God's gentlest care This is my prayer.

# In Remembrance of First Anniversary Mrs Margaret Postill, National Press Officer, Union of Catholic Mothers

**It was with great sadness that we announced the passing of Mrs Margaret Postill. Margaret died following a long battle with cancer surrounded by her family, husband Stewart and son Gary, on Friday 29th April 2022.**



'Mags' as we knew her, was born Margaret Mary McIntosh on 16th April 1948, in Tweed Street, Hartlepool. One of three children born to Alex and Ann McIntosh, Margaret grew up with an older brother Bill who was 10 months her senior, and a younger sister Elaine who was born when Margaret was 4 years old. Elaine reliably tells us that her brother and sister often tormented each other about being the same age for 2 months of the year.

Margaret was baptised into the Catholic faith with Nancy Wilde, who was a Nun and friend of the family, standing as her Godmother. Margaret later attended Sacred Heart School and enjoyed a catholic education which instilled in her a strong catholic faith.

Margaret always wanted to work with children and had a strong desire to travel. After working odd jobs at home in Hartlepool, Margaret was able to combine the two when she travelled to Italy at the age of 18 to work as a nanny to a Doctor and his wife, caring for their 2 children.

Eventually she returned home to England and found employment as a waitress in a holiday camp where she met her future husband, Stewart Postill.

Margaret and Stewart were married by Margaret's cousin, Fr Dennis Tindall and they enjoyed 47 years of marriage having settled in Reddish, Stockport to raise their son, Gary. Margaret went on to work as a Teaching Assistant for 17 years at Fir Tree Primary School before she retired.

Margaret was enrolled into UCM, joining St Joseph's Foundation, Reddish where she worked tirelessly for many years. She served in a number of different roles on St Joseph's Foundation Committee, including President.

Margaret also served on the Diocese of Salford UCM Committee as Press Officer, which was her favourite role of all. From there, Margaret moved on to National Committee as National Press Officer, a role she loved as it brought her in to contact with UCM members across the country.

She joined pilgrims to Walsingham every year and, as captured in the photograph, she carried the statue of Our Lady of Walsingham whilst part of the National Committee.

We have so much to thank Margaret for, her tireless dedication and enthusiasm has encouraged members at both local and national levels to get involved and work with UCM. Margaret always worked with a smile and a sense of fun and she is sadly missed by all.

**Rest In Peace  
 Margaret Postill.  
 b.16.04.1948 – d.29.04.2022**

# Remembering, thanking, asking for forgiveness and looking to the future

## WUCWO President's Monthly Message, May 2023

Dear friends:

As we approach the end of this WUCWO period (2018-2023), I think it is appropriate to make memory and take stock. In Italian, the etymology of the verb remember [ricordare] is "to bring to heart". We started in Africa, at the General Assembly in Dakar, with the joy and welcome of so many wonderful women from our organisations in that region.

I think what has marked this period the most is the pandemic. The "Statio Orbis", Pope Francis' historic global prayer of 27 March 2020, guided us. The Holy Father was the global leader of this crisis. WUCWO not only experienced it, but also used it to learn and use cyber media to organise online prayer meetings, to celebrate the 110th anniversary of its foundation and to provide training in various languages on the current magisterium of the Church: With webinars on Evangelii gaudium, Amoris laetitia and the prevention of abuse in the family and in schools, Laudato si and its platform, Fratelli tutti and the path towards synodality, having as a basis Gaudete et exultate, that is, growth in our common call to holiness.

We knocked on the doors of several offices of the Holy See, in addition to maintaining the institutional relationship with the Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life and the Secretariat of State, as is natural for WUCWO. A series of common activities followed, carried out jointly with the Dicastery for the Service of Integral Human

Development, the Dicastery for Interreligious Dialogue, the Secretariat of the Synod, the Dicastery for Communication and also in collaboration with embassies to the Holy See of various countries and continents and with various international Catholic organisations such as the International Forum of Catholic Action, with which we have been working for a long time, as well as with Caritas Internationalis, Talitha Kum, etc.

The new programme: the World Women's Observatory (WVO) has turned WUCWO - already an existential observatory of women in the world - into an organisation that "listens to transform lives". With scientific support, we give visibility to women who seem invisible, with their sufferings and strengths, with their dramas and good practices, to generate synergy in a Church that seeks to live in a synodal style, serving communities and countries, seeking to evangelise and to contribute to integral development (www.worldwomensobservatory.org).

I suggest that we bring to our hearts, as part of our recent history, all that has led us to this point. "Remembering does not mean repeating, but treasuring, reviving and, with gratitude, allowing the power of the Holy Spirit to set our hearts on fire, like those of the first disciples (cf. Lk 24:32)" (Pope Francis, 23 December 2021). Let us give thanks together to the Lord, to our Mother Mary and let us look to the future.

The humble - humble men or women - are those who are concerned not simply with the past - the Holy Father continues - but also with the future, since they know how to look ahead (...), remembering the past with gratitude. The humble give life, attract others and push onwards towards

the unknown that lies ahead. The proud, on the other hand, simply repeat, grow rigid (...) and enclose themselves in that repetition, feeling certain about what they know and fearful of anything new because they cannot control it; they feel destabilized... because they have lost their memory." (Pope Francis, 23 December 2021).

And when each of us takes stock of these almost 5 years, we will surely also ask for forgiveness for our faults and omissions. Let me do so now before you. I hope you will forgive me. I ask the Lord, as He can always "write straight with crooked lines", to make all my mistakes and shortcomings to become a reason that will help WUCWO improving. "for nothing will be impossible for God" (Lk 37, 1).

I thank every woman in WUCWO. I have learned a lot from you. I carry with me a treasure trove of experiences. In particular, I thank my colleagues and friends on the Executive, the Council, the ecclesiastical assistants and every member of our staff. Without your hard work, we would not have been able to overcome the difficulties that have arisen during this period and to contribute to the growth of WUCWO.

With the same affection as always, I say goodbye as President,

**María Lía Zervino, Servidora.  
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# KENYA DROUGHT CRISIS

## Urgent Appeal: The most vulnerable people in Kenya need your help

Dear Union of Catholic Mothers reader,  
 People in Kenya desperately need your help.

Drought across East Africa has led to crop failures and widespread food shortages. People in Kenya are paying the devastating price for a climate crisis they have done nothing to create.

Families, like Julius's are on the verge of starvation. Many are facing the impossible choice between food, water, and medicine.

The scale of the tragedy is now almost unthinkable. Millions are struggling to afford food. For people with disabilities who can't travel to work or food aid stations: unless help finds them, they will starve.

Kevin Sudi from the CBM Global Kenya Team says:  
**"People are already dying – and if the world continues to ignore this "invisible crisis" many**

**more will lose their lives. You and I cannot end a drought, but together we can save the lives of the most vulnerable people caught up in it."**

A gift today of £95 could help support a family like Julius's for nearly three months or help pay for the costs of a wheelchair or walking aid so that people living with disabilities can access the help they need.

**Your urgent donation will help us put God's love into action by providing life-saving support through this crisis to help the most vulnerable people.**

Thank you and God bless.

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