



A movement of the Church encouraging people to know, love and follow Jesus

December 2021

Message From the Lay Director Judy Short

Dear Cursillistas

In many ways this year has also been a challenge as we still had to accept that Covid was not in the past.....but I am delighted to say that some events did go ahead this year starting with a wonderful local Ultreya at St Peters in High Salvington. God blessed the day with warm sunshine, so we were able to be in the beautiful garden behind the church the whole day even celebrating the Eucharist outside. It was a much needed and uplifting day with laughter, singing, worship and cake! It happened to be my birthday that day and I cannot think of a more lovely way to have spent it. Read Irene's article about the day.

The PP4 and DDU also went ahead after much planning by Trudi and myself and even with restricted numbers it was a very special weekend for all who came. For me personally it was just what I so needed, for my mind body and soul. To finally arrive at Wychcroft WITH a suitcase was wonderful!!! Trudi has written a very informative feedback letter, included in the newsletter, so please do read it. We finally got to sing around the fire pit which we had given as a gift to Wychcroft.

Chichester #32 with Southwark finally took place after two years of waiting for our Lay Rector, Liz Cooper. The two training days leading up to this were both wonderful days and our three members of staff from Southwark were very warmly welcomed and very quickly became valuable members of the team. This was our first joint weekend and much planning and thought had gone into it from a practical point of view and judging by the closing service the weekend had unfolded as Cursillo weekends always do, so this is the start of an exciting era for both dioceses. Please pray for Jacky as she now begins her journey, as LR, for the next weekend in March (3-6th) which will be Southwark led and so it will be Southwark #42 with Chichester. Our Irene Adams will be OLR again as she looks ahead to lead the October weekend next year. Besides Irene, Chichester will have three more staff - two lay and one ordained. Pilgrims, of course, will come from both dioceses.

Coming up is our last "event" of the year.....an Ultreya at Ardingly when we welcome our new Cursillistas. By the time you read this it will have happened and I hope I would have seen many of you there!!

Looking ahead to next year..... Your secretariat will finally be getting together for our long awaited "quiet day" which will bring us all face to face once more and we can enjoy meeting and discussing the future and sharing in

Eucharist together and of course, prayer, which underpins all we do. Our bi-monthly meetings have continued throughout the year on Zoom which works well but we are all in need of a get together!!! I would like to thank them, on your behalf, for all they do to keep Cursillo thriving and active in this diocese. There are also many others who are holding non secretariat roles who are busy doing vital things for us all such as making our Cursillo crosses and name badges, to name just two. On the subject of name badges please can we all say thank you to Paule Harper who has been making them for a while but has now stood down.

Our next Cursillo weekend – Southwark #42 with Chichester is set for March 3-6th so please do start thinking about who you think God would like to attend and whom you could approach on His behalf.

Following on soon after will be our first Ultreya ...March 19th at St Thomas a Becket in Pagham.

Our AGM will be held on May 21st at All Saint's Church, Findon Valley followed by an Ultreya. It will be so good to have this in person having had the last two on Zoom.

Looking further ahead

The National Ultreya on September 3rd will be a joint affair between Southwark and Londonthis will bring the occasion a mere train journey away from us without the need to stay overnight!! As Chichester is now joining Southwark for weekends it would be a great opportunity to attend this wonderful event. Being with so many Cursillistas is truly uplifting and a very

colourful sight so, put this date into your diary and let's all go up together, en masse, if possible, on the train and fly the banner for Chichester!! It really is a joy filled day.....imagine one of our Ultreyas then imagine it being five times bigger and you can begin to imagine the delights of a National Ultreya!!!!

Also in September is another PP Weekend. We have booked Wychcroft for 23-25th so put the date into your diary.....details will follow next year..... In October (27-30th) we will hold Chichester #33 with Southwark which will be led by Irene Adams. This is half term week so this is the opportunity for teachers etc to be a pilgrim so start praying for God to guide you to those he would like you to ask to attend this weekend.

We haven't as yet set a date or venue for our final Ultreya to follow on after this weekend. Please consider your church and/or church hall.....we would love to come if you invite us!! Janice Lelliott will be very happy to hear from you (via me if you don't have her contact details) and to help you organise it.

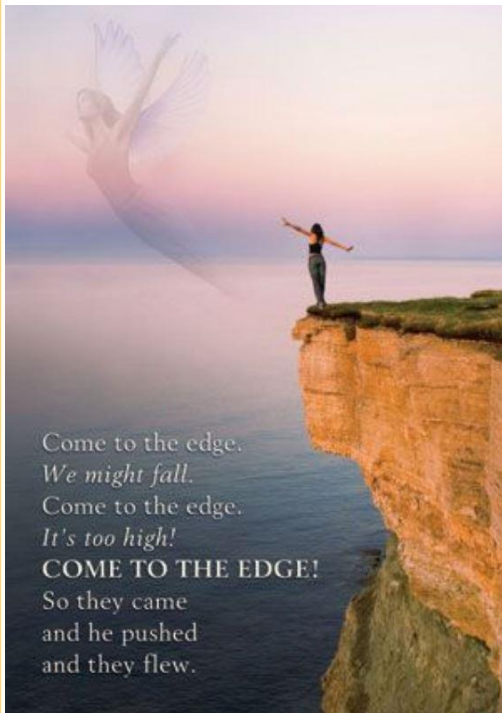
I am very privileged to be Lay Director to such a wonderful community of Cursillistas and I thank each one of you for your prayers, your passion for Cursillo and for all the things you do. It only exists because of the time, effort and love you put into it.....so I ask one thing..... "keep going"!!!or in Spanish.... ULTREYA!!!!!!

May God bless you abundantly as we travel together

Love Judy

laydirector@chichestercursillo.co.uk

These words were given to me by Ruth Hitchcox on my first training day a few years ago – I offer it to you now, in her memory, as we begin this new year together on Earth.... Ruth, however, now knows how to fly!!
May we all have the courage and trust in our God to go to the edge this year and do His will.....here on Earth.



Come to the edge.
We might fall.
Come to the edge.
It's too high!
COME TO THE EDGE!
So they came
and he pushed
and they flew.

Ultreya at St Peter's, High Salvington 17th July 2021

This was organised (holding our breaths that Covid would permit) by Maggie Williams, Linda Pudney and myself as the National Lockdown restrictions were being lifted. It was held outside in St Peter's lovely garden so all who came would feel safe to meet up and enjoy the day. So, cakes were made, teas and coffees arranged, seats put out and marquee erected. It turned into a wonderful, sunny day and 27 Cursillistas joined us for singing

and joyful laughter. (Numbers at gatherings were still restricted). Reverend Keith lead the worship, which made our day. Maggie Williams' witness talk was amazing and left us wanting more. To be able to sing and dance and worship our Lord after so many months of lockdown was truly inspirational. So many hymns and songs of praise were requested, Maggie struggled to find the right music but always coped, somehow!
Irene Adams

Pilgrim's Progress 4 and Day of Deeper Understanding 30 July – 1st August 2021

This event, as you will know, had been on the calendar for some time, but planning it was beset with much uncertainty due to the Pandemic, and right up to the last minute we were still not sure whether it would happen. However back in March Judy and I decided to trust that we would be able to hold the weekend in some form, so started the process of planning the weekend. We knew from the start that numbers would be restricted and that we might have to tailor the weekend to take in to account covid restrictions. The decision was taken to keep the whole weekend as simple as possible, making sure that we could concentrate on the 'Day of Deeper Understanding' which would be held on the Saturday. Judy negotiated with BACC's to engage the presence of both the Spiritual Director, Reverend Stephen Bowring and President Beth Roberts, for the DDU. We planned the day and speakers to concentrate on the areas we thought most needed re-visiting.

With numbers severely restricted, (maximum of 20 in any one room at any time), priority booking was offered to new Cursillistas (Those who had not had the opportunity to attend a DDU before). There were a range of booking options, with a variety of prices - complicated but it did make it possible for people to pick what suited them best. The invitation was sent to 30 newish Cursillistas from Chichester #29, #30 and #31, with 7 taking the opportunity to attend, some opting to stay for most or all of the weekend. Some however were still reluctant to commit because of Covid uncertainties. Booking was then opened up to all Cursillistas.

Having sorted the DDU we then moved on to concentrate on the rest of the weekend. Once again this was kept simple – but we were keen to have a relaxed weekend with the opportunity to just be together with lots of time ‘just to be’. The programme was planned with a variety of worship in different styles, some creative activity, the chance for reflection and meditation and of course lots and lots of singing.

Day 1 – Friday - was a relaxed and enjoyable day, even if the weather was against us. No rush to do anything and time to be with people again. In the afternoon there was a creative activity as well as ideas for individual reflective time, including a quiet time in the new “Prayer Walk” It did, however, stop raining long enough for us to commission the Fire Pit and then sing around it. Great fun and not too cold.

Day 2 – Saturday - was dedicated to the DDU, which was held in the Chapel as that gave us greater space for Social Distancing. Reverend Stephen Bowring had been due to talk on The Three Day Weekend, and to give

information about a Two-Day weekend, but he had had to cancel at short notice due to the intervention of Covid.

Rather than let us down he prepared a film of his talk which we were able to play to all present. This talk was wide-ranging with so many good ideas and thoughts for the future of Cursillo and was inspirational. All present agreed that the content needed to be shared with a much wider audience, and Beth Roberts was planning to take this idea back to BACC with a view to making it available to all Diocese.

We were very disappointed that Stephen was unable to attend, but sometimes good things do come from such disappointments. If Stephen had attended, 20 people would have heard his wonderful talk, now we have the possibility of this talk reaching hundreds.

Helena then followed with a talk about the role and structure of Cursillo. Before lunch we shared Eucharist together.

President Beth Roberts talked to us about the 4th Day and then I gave a talk about the importance of the Pilgrim Partner. All the talks sparked a lot of discussion and questions.

Day 3 – Sunday – was again a much more relaxed day. Judy and I had asked Linda Pudney, Irene Adams and Maggie Williams to prepare something creative for the Sunday morning. I have to say we got far, far, more than we could ever have hoped for. They had prepared two pieces both of which need to be seen by a much larger audience. We were suggesting that both pieces should be performed at an Ultreya.

The weekend was a joy to be part of - so much laughter and emotion, singing and of course food, and it was

wonderful just to be together again at Wychcroft. Feedback from those that attended has all been very positive and has been fed back to Judy for her to include in a report for the Newsletter. Pilgrim Progress weekends are a great addition to our programme and give us all the opportunity to continue our journey of faith together. They usually prove to be very popular. They started originally from the need to fill a booked weekend when we had had to postpone a Cursillo weekend, and originally were planned at very short notice. They work better if there is time to plan.



DDU

We have held DDUs after two or three weekends. I suppose it could be said that if only 7 of 30 approached chose to attend, then maybe there is not the need for this, (last time round the take-up from new Cursillistas was not great either). However, I have now attended 4 DDU and have learnt something new each time. Those that attended commented on how somethings now made more sense, and that they had learnt a lot. I think there is still a need for this follow up day to help new Cursillistas make sense of the weekend and given that we are looking at two day weekends, I can see the need for

this type of refresher being even more important.

Trudi Kearsley



Blessing the new banner

Message from our Spiritual Director, James Cooper

I love a good proverb. One of my favourites is: If you want to make God laugh, tell him your plans! God has a knack of ensuring that life events pull us up sharp and make us think. Recently I was given a cancer diagnosis; it seems treatable, but it has brought me up short and forced me to think about what really matters. Some of you will have heard me use the Spice Girls' song, 'Tell me what you want, what you really-really want', to introduce the topic of spirituality. Well, now I've been forced to ask myself - what do I really want and what does really matter to me?

For a start my family and friends really matter to me; I feel incredibly lucky to know so many wonderful people, and it is those relationships which give

meaning to my life. One of the things I value most about Cursillo is the simple joy of meeting with enthusiastic and loving fellow Christians, something I can easily take for granted as I fail to recognise how blessed I am to be able to share this experience.

And, of course, my faith also matters to me. One of the first things I did when I was given the diagnosis was to ask the Assistant Chaplain at the Hospice where I work to anoint me. The interesting thing was that I felt this was a pledge of my loyalty to God rather a request for a cure; I wasn't expecting a miracle, rather it came out of a deep desire to pin my colours to God's mast.

Whatever my journey demands, the important thing is to recognise that God and I will walk with each other through thick and thin. For all of us on similar journeys, whether we are people of faith or not, the journey is the same. God doesn't promise that the journey will be smooth and easy. Jesus himself was forced to walk to the cross - anything but a smooth and easy journey. The only thing we are promised is that God is with us every step of the way. So, when we pray for ourselves or those who are going on a difficult journey, pray above all else that we and they are aware of the God who walks alongside. At the start of this kind of journey there is always a sense of trepidation, but we must simply step out into the unknown., step out in faith. George VI summed this up perfectly in his 1939 Christmas Day address ('nicked', I have to say, from the opening words of the poem *The Gate of the Year* by Minnie Haskins) when he told the nation:

*And I said to the man who
stood at the gate of the year:
"Give me a light that I may*

tread safely into the unknown."

And he replied:

*"Go out into the darkness and
put your hand into the Hand of
God.*

*That shall be to you better than
light and safer than a known
way."*

*So I went forth, and finding the
Hand of God, trod gladly into
the night.*

So, as we proclaim Ultreya (!) let us pray that we are all aware of God's constant presence beside us.

James

Music and Cursillo, Maggie Williams

Shakespeare said in Twelfth night, 'If music be the food of love, play on.' I think we in Cursillo could arguably change that to, 'if music be the worship of the God of love, sing on!'

We certainly sang on at the Ultreya! at St Peters in July. After an absence of get togethers due to the pandemic, it seemed that people were just happy to sit and chat together outside, for we were blessed with glorious weather, and ... sing! We started with a few old favourites, continued with a few requests of some more favourites, then finished ... an hour later, with some favourites. I wonder, are there any hymns and worship songs that aren't our favourites!?

So singing was back on the agenda! Yay!

It wasn't long to wait for more communal singing at the national Ultreya! in Norwich, where some old favourites (!) were sung with gusto at the Cathedral. It was lovely to see some of the Chichester gang there

along with some friends that we only see once a year at these get togethers. I am not sure what the onlookers thought as we processed into the cathedral with our banners, singing at the tops of our voices. Praise be! Now that's another old favourite! (Thora Hird DBE presented Praise Be on the telly for those under a certain age!) Wonderfully, and thankfully, weekend #32 that has been the longest in planning was able to take place in October this year with a wonderful merry band of pilgrims. Now, I can sing – as in, I will sing anywhere, anything, at any time – but this lot were in a different league altogether. I have never done so much impromptu singing in all my life. Feed them a line and they were off! 'Food glorious food' was to be heard coursing its way long the passage to the kitchen whilst we waited for yet more food – not sure what they thought of hearing us singing about indigestion! All the old-time favourites came out, the music hall songs, songs from the shows ... it didn't even matter if we didn't know all the words! And that was in addition to all the singing built into the weekend. I did hear say by the way, from one of the pilgrims on my table, that DeColores was the best song we sang!! That has my vote. They even used 'We are Marching' as the basis for their skit, changing the words of course and gave us a hilarious insight into their take on the weekend ... and us!

Have you ever caught yourself scowling or frowning or grumpy when singing? Be aware next time you sing, take a look at yourself. Because I can tell you that the joy, laughter and fun that came out of all that singing at the weekend, the Ultreya! and the national was something to behold. I am sure that

God was rocking to the beat and laughing along with us. And the angels were not left out either. Suzy Kassem in a poem called Rise up and Salute the Sun wrote, "sing, I tell you and the angels will sing with you." My goodness there have been some parties recently! Singing most definitely produces laughter, at least in Cursillo – I'm thinking of the aforementioned DeColores for starters!

Did you know that laughter *is* the best medicine? And after the year or two that we have all had, we certainly need some of the stuff. Laughter releases endorphins into the brain. Endorphins are the 'feel good' chemicals that induces a 'euphoric' state without the drawbacks of, say heroin!

Laughter is contagious and it forms social bonds and togetherness. It works through those endorphins again. Who knew? I guess it's a bit like playing endorphin dominoes – one starts to laugh and then they all fall down laughing! Maybe we can try at the next Ultreya!

Laughter is central to relationships, those that laugh together stick together! Laughter has an effect similar to antidepressants, and releases serotonin in the brain. It might not last long, but we can laugh again and get more!

Laughing protects your heart – you heard it here first! It is thought that laughter has an anti-inflammatory effect that protects blood vessels and heart muscles from the effects of cardiovascular disease.

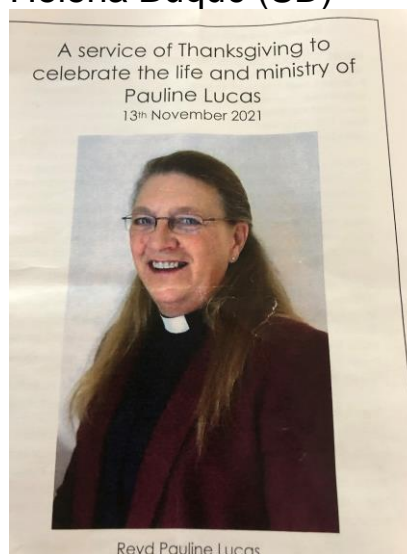
So, singing produces laughter and laughter produces all these health benefits, why wouldn't we want to sing? God and the angels have been having a wonderful time singing along with us all at our Cursillo events.

Claude Monet said that he would like to paint the way a bird sings. Maybe as we worship God through our singing we can paint a glorious picture of what Christianity is all about. Now there's a thought.



Cursillo community here in Chichester and to all she was to so many people, and a testimony of all that she and Stephen had together shared and achieved. Our prayers are with Stephen, their children and grandchildren.

Pauline we miss you, we are so grateful to have known you and have many happy memories of you. Thank you. May you rest in peace and rise in glory.
Helena Buqué (SD)



Remembering Pauline

The Service to celebrate the life of Pauline was finally able to take place at Kirdford on 13th November. Well supported by friends and family, and many from the Chichester Cursillo community, this was an uplifting and joy-filled celebration of a life lived to the full that was cut tragically short on Good Friday this year. I felt an overwhelming presence of Pauline in that church as we listened to testimonies of her life as a sister, youth leader, Mum, Curate, Priest and Spiritual Advisor. A common thread through all these words was the abiding and deep Christian faith of Pauline, her love of family and her selfless care for everyone she came into contact with, coupled with a wicked sense of humour and capacity for fun! Revd Clive Jenkins linked everything together with beautiful prayers and Kate and Andy Steer led the worship music with joy. It was a fitting tribute to our wonderful Pauline, to all that she gave to us as a

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2022

Ultreya March 19th at St Thomas a Becket in Pagham.

AGM May 21st at All Saint's Church, Findon Valley followed by an Ultreya.

The National Ultreya, September 3rd

PP Weekend, Wychcroft September 23-25th

Chichester #33 October (27-30th) with Southwark, led by Irene Adams.