



Sisters of Charity of St. Paul the Apostle

Year of Consecrated Life

April 2015



*Loving God, guide our life`s journey
towards truth.*

*Open our eyes to the wonder of your
abundant blessings. Continue to send us
as witnesses of Gospel joy, full of courage,
zeal and enthusiasm. By our reflective
living and prayer may we grow daily in the
image of Jesus, your Son. Amen.*

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**Day for Consecrated Life at St Chad's
7th February 2015**

On 7th February many religious men and women gathered in the Grimshaw room at St. Chad's Cathedral. The day was an opportunity for religious to meet with each other, to meet Archbishop Longley, to celebrate and congratulate those religious who are having their Golden Jubilees this year and to listen to the guest speaker Sr. Una O'Neill a Religious Sister of Charity who had travelled from Dublin.

The theme of Sr. Una's talk was "Living Religious Life with Passion" and it can be certainly said that Sr. Una spoke with much passion and she shared her own experiences with conviction and some humour. She reminded us that our call as consecrated women and men is to be a light in the darkness and to convey hope. "Hope is most a virtue when there is least to justify it". We have choices to make : to be life giving; to be compassionate; to be generous. She encouraged us to choose life and walk alongside those who are in the twilight zone. As consecrated women and men she stated that we must stop asking the questions of yesterday. It is important to believe the promise that we have been given, to be authentic that we are what we say and we keep our spirit of joy. She reminded us of the ninth beatitude, "Blessed are those who are able to laugh at themselves, they will never cease to be amused."

After the talk we gathered in the Cathedral for Mass. The opening of the Mass saw the jubilarians in procession with Archbishop Longley and some of the diocesan clergy. Two of our sisters, Sr. Catherine Burke and Sr. Thérèse O'Neill were part of the procession. During the Mass the Archbishop commented on the contribution which all the Religious make to the life of the Archdiocese and he stated that the local church would be very much impoverished without the presence of Religious. He offered special congratulations to this year's Jubilarians.

The Mass incorporated the Renewal Of Vows for all those who were present.

After Mass many people gathered in the Grimshaw Room for lunch.

"The joy of the Gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus.

With Jesus Christ joy is constantly born anew."

Pope Francis

DIOCESE OF SALFORD

The Year of Consecrated Life

The coming of our new Bishop of Salford, the Right Rev John Arnold, coincided with the start of the Year of Consecrated Life. Sr. Eileen Noonan attended the Ceremony of Installation of Bishop John at Salford Cathedral on 8th December 2014.



Arms Quo
fas vocas

'Go where divine
Providence calls
you'

On Saturday 22nd December, the Bishop held his first meeting with the religious of the Diocese, with a Concelebrated Mass, at Our Lady of Grace Church and Servite Priory in Kersal in Salford. During his sermon the Bishop appealed for prayer for him and for the future of the Diocese. He offered us his own personal prayer '**Stay with us Lord on our journey**' as our prayer too. His call was for a sense of unity in the work ahead as co-workers with him. He reminded us that age should not be a limitation to prayer and support.

He expressed a sincere appreciation for the work of Religious in the past and in the present too. A list of the Bishop's priorities for the first year of his ministry were available for each one to take and we were invited to comment or make suggestions personally over the weeks or months ahead.

For example;

Vocations.

Age of Confirmation

Age of Confirmation and post confirmation catechesis

Permanent Diaconate

Lay Formation

Consecrated Life

Diocesan Development Plan



He also announced the names of a group to act as Vicars for Religious, for a trial period during his first year in office two Religious Priests and a Sister, were appointed.

At a simple gathering of tea and biscuits, everyone had the opportunity to meet the Bishop and introduce themselves, and to meet the new 'Vicars for Religious' also.

On Monday 2nd February we had our second meeting with the Bishop, at the first Mass to formally open the Year For Consecrated Life at Our Lady of Grace Church in Prestwich in Manchester. During the Mass we renewed our commitment as Religious and Consecrated Persons. We offer the Prayer of Commitment here:



Loving Father, Son and Spirit, trusting in your faithful love on this World Day of Consecrated Life, we renew our commitment to following Jesus who was poor, chaste and obedient. We commit ourselves anew to our mission of serving the Kingdom in the Church. Grant us the grace, through the intercession of Our Lady, to witness to the joy of the Gospel as missionary disciples serving the poor, always faithful to the charisms of our congregations, and reflecting the life of Christ to the world. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

After the Mass, once again everybody had a chance to meet the Bishop and each Community was offered a copy of 'Living the Consecrated Life in the Third Millennium, by Ronald J. McAimsh C.S.s.R and also a Calendar for this special year.

Sr. Celestine and Sr. Eileen





Celebrating the Year of Consecrated Life Gillis College, 2 February, 2015

On Monday 2nd February, the Feast of the Presentation, the Religious of Scotland gathered together with the Bishops, to mark the year of Consecrated Life called by Pope Francis. In a way typical of him, Pope Francis had allotted more than a year for “the year.” It started with the Feast of the Presentation of Our Lady in the Temple on November 21st, and continues through to the feast of the Presentation of the Lord on 2nd February 2016. Over two hundred religious from contemplative and active congregations were there. Religious brothers, sisters and priests came together from the sixty-seven religious congregations present in Scotland. As is usual at such meetings, people were meeting one another after a long time. But people who had worked together in different parts of the world suddenly ran into someone they knew with expressions of delight.

The gathering took place in Gillis College in Edinburgh, where Archbishop Leo Cushley presided together with Bishop Toal, Bishop Robson and Bishop Keenan. Bishop Gilbert of Aberdeen, himself a member of the Benedictine order, was the preacher.

Bishop Gilbert invited the religious to journey with him through the gospel account of the Presentation. He explored the configuration of religious as the bearers of light, bearers of the Cross, bearers of the Resurrection, and bearers of the Word. Here are the Bishop’s own words:

“I remember a striking saying of a Benedictine abbot: ‘It is the task of monks to keep the Psalms alive in the Church.’ We can broaden it: ‘It’s a task of the consecrated to keep Scripture alive in the Church.’ We need to read our Rules and Constitutions as a kind of practical exegesis of the Word. This lets the air in. It undoes the knots that occasionally entangle us. It makes us agents of unity instead of defenders of our corners. And I think if we live our life in this light of the Word, then we become a lived exegesis – in our weaknesses as well as our strengths. If we make his word our home, if Mary-like we ponder it, then, dare I say it, we, will recover the inspirational poetry of our lives. And we and our communities will be words of God, not meaningless cries. The French have this expressive word for an envoy, an ambassador: porte-parole. We will be bearers of light if we carry, bear, the Word.”

During the Mass, the religious renewed their vows and their commitment to witness to the Gospel in the service of the Church in Scotland. After the Mass, there was an excellent lunch provided by the Gillis Centre, ably assisted by senior pupils from Edinburgh’s three Catholic Senior Schools, Holyrood, St Augustine’s and St Thomas of Aquinas. The usual thank yous ended with a presentation from the Conference of Religious Scotland to the Bishops of Scotland. The Conference had purchased in the name of the Bishops through SCIAF a well for a village in Cambodia. A well was in Jesus’ time and continues to be in many cultures now, a place of significant meetings and a source of life.

James Crampsey, sj,
CRS President

Article sent by Sr. Colette

The World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life

Onesti

On Sunday February 1st Bishop Aurel concelebrated the parish Liturgy, in the Sanctuary of Bl. Ieremia Valahul in Onesti. The Capuchin community are the custodians of The Sanctuary, which is the National Shrine and place of Pilgrimage.



Eleven congregations from the Onesti area were represented and all renewed their vows during the Liturgy, there were approximately fifty religious present, mainly young Romanian men and women from Italian based congregations. The Sisters of St. Paul are the only “English” congregation in the Diocese.

After the Liturgy all religious assembled in the Monastery, where the Bishop gave a short talk and then invited, a member from each congregation to speak for a few minutes about their charism and the work they are doing in the diocese at this time. Sr. Ermina, did the Sisters of St. Paul justice. A short discussion followed during which there was an exchange of views on Cardinal Braz Avis visit in April, when all religious are invited to participate in a celebration at the Cathedral in Iasi to mark the Year of Consecrated Life. Discussions over, all enjoyed a beautiful meal prepared and served by the Capuchins.



Article sent by Sr. Juliana O`Sullivan

ST PAUL'S CONVENT, VERNON ROAD



On Wednesday March 11th we held a quiet day of Exposition here from 10.30 a.m. till 3.00 p.m. to celebrate The Year of Consecrated Life. A class of Year 7 pupils came in for the opening of Exposition and Sr Therese explained to them the purpose of the day, to pray for people consecrated to God and to pray for vocations to Consecrated Life. They stayed for a little while to pray, partly quietly, partly guided by Sister.

For the rest of the day there was an aura of peace in the chapel as Sisters came to spend some time before the Blessed Sacrament. In the morning Sisters came from Handsworth, Northfield and Annie Bright's.

In the afternoon we were pleased to welcome eight Sisters from Selly Park. During the lunch hour several of the staff and girls from school came to pray.

At 2.30 Deacon Philip Cunah, shortly to be ordained for the diocese of Middlesborough, came from Oscott College to give Benediction, together with three other students.

Another Year 7 class came to the chapel for this and again Sr Therese explained the meaning of the day to them.

After Benediction Deacon Philip talked to the girls, telling them the story of his own vocation in a lively and interesting way, very relevant to the purpose of the day.

After the close of Exposition we were very happy to welcome our visitors from Selly Park and Oscott into our Community Room for tea and light refreshments. It was a homely gathering and there was plenty of cheerful conversation. We all enjoyed the day and felt that we had in some way joined with other Sisters to celebrate the privilege of our vocation.

Not part of the day but worth mentioning here, we had visits from our six Year 7 classes to the Community Room earlier in the year to see the convent and to hear from Sr Therese about the vocation and life of the Sisters.

EXTRACT FROM “EVANGELII GAUDIUM”

If we are to share our lives with others and generously give of ourselves, we also have to realize that every person is worthy of our giving. Not for their physical appearance, their abilities, their language, their way of thinking, or for any satisfaction that we might receive, but rather because they are God’s handiwork, his creation. God created that person in his image, and he or she reflects something of God’s glory. Every human being is the object of God’s infinite tenderness, and he himself is present in their lives. Jesus offered his precious blood on the cross for that person. Appearances notwithstanding, every person is immensely holy and deserves our love. Consequently, if I can help at least one person to have a better life, that already justifies the offering of my life. It is a wonderful thing to be God’s faithful people. We achieve fulfilment when we break down walls and our heart is filled with faces and names! (*SPIRIT – FILLED EVANGELIZERS – 274*).

REFLECTION:

Recognizing the image of God in others, Pope Francis teaches, should come even before the desire to evangelize. “Appearances notwithstanding,” he asserts, “every person is immensely holy and deserves our love”. We are all made in the image and likeness of God. We must meditate once again on the Gospel message, and on what Jesus’ coming means for the human person. His love for the individual informs *our* love for the individual. His sacrifice elevates the dignity of all people. If we truly unite ourselves to Christ, the desire to continue His mission to “draw all people to Himself” is inevitable. What does God’s “infinite tenderness” means to us?

How is tenderness as a gospel quality evident in our life, in our community?

Do we recognize the image of God in others?

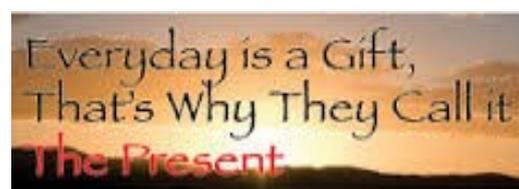
How do we help others to have a better life?

How far are we able to touch Christ’s wounds, let ourselves be shaped by the model of Christ’s life?

PRAYER:

Lord, give us a tender and generous heart. Let us take time daily to talk to people who need a good word, mend what is broken, and touch what needs to be healed. O Lord, give us the grace to live out each day as if it were a gift. Amen

From Sr. Teri Ciuchin



St Thomas More Catholic Primary School,

Horse Shoes Lane,

Sheldon,

B26 3HU.

Thursday 8th January 2015.

Dear Sister Kathleen,

During the Year of Consecrated Life, the children in Year six would like to develop further links with you and your community. One of our classes has St Paul as their Class Saint. We have some ideas that we hope to discuss with you if this is convenient.

Our class assembly is on the 29th of January and it is about Mother Genevieve Dupuis. As Mother Genevieve was the foundress of The Sisters of Charity of St Paul the Apostle, we would be extremely grateful if you or another sister could spare some time to come and talk to us about Mother Genevieve, in order to help us with the preparation for our assembly. If this is not possible, we would also like to invite you and the sisters to attend our assembly on January 29th, which will take place in the school hall at 8.55am.

We look forward to meeting you and thank you for giving up your time to help us.

Many thanks,

Casey, Hollie, Lauren and all the children in Year Six,



The next two pages of the booklet tell us more about what has been happening in St. Thomas More School Sheldon.

Sr. Anne Cunningham kindly attended the School Assembly and shared the Story of Mother Genevieve Dupuis with the pupils.

Year 6 Assembly Reflection

On the 29th of January 2015, both of the classes in Year Six presented an assembly in front of the whole school. Our assembly was about Mother Genevieve Dupuis, the Foundress of the Sisters of Saint Paul, the order that Sister Susan belongs to. This linked in with the theme of our assemblies on the Consecrated Life.

Mother Genevieve had a great devotion to God and her Patron Saint was St Paul; her faith was very strong. Mother Genevieve Dupuis was a woman of great vision and courage. She was not afraid to take risks and although she opened 88 convents, she also closed 37. She started her life in Paris on the 28th January and later was sent to England to spread the word of God. While in England she taught children and orphans day and night, she was also responsible for establishing the convent of St Paul in Selly Park, Birmingham.

We will remember Mother Genevieve as a good role model; a faithful Sister of Charity. Humbly, patiently, with unwavering perseverance, always with hope and confidence she carried through the great work entrusted to her. She made real the words of Jesus Christ: " Though shalt love thy Lord thy God, with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind, and with thy whole strength; and with thy neighbour as thy self."

Our assembly finished with prayers for the sisters and then we sang the beautiful hymn 'Omnibus Omnia' which was written by Sister Margaret, a Sister of St Paul.

We would like to thank Sister Kathleen and Sister Anne for sharing their knowledge about Mother Genevieve with us and to Sister Anne for coming to our assembly.

By Casey and Ciara



Year of Consecrated Life Celebration

The whole school came together on Friday 28th November 2014 to commemorate the start of the Year of Consecrated Life with a beautiful Mass led by our Year 6 classes. We invited members from local religious communities to come and join us for this celebration.

The children explained what Consecrated Life means during the Introduction to our Mass.

During the homily Father John, Simon, a seminarian from Oscott College and Sister Susan told us about their vocation, and how they knew that God was calling them to dedicate their lives to Him.



Following the Mass some of the children met the sisters and were able to ask them if they would share their story with us, building strong links during this special year.

Dates for the Diary

7th—9th May The Nun in the World : A transnational study of Catholic Sisters and the Second Vatican Council at London Global Gateway, Piccadilly

More details from Religious Life Institute

30th May Solemn Vespers at Blackfriars, Oxford 4.00pm

21st November Vocations Road Show in St. Chad`s Cathedral .. More details to follow later

6th February 2016 Day for Religious with Archbishop Bernard. St. Chad`s Cathedral. Speaker Sr. Pauline Darby SCHL

If you are interested in any of the following Retreats or Seminars.

Contact: Claret Centre, The Towers, High St. Buckden, Cambs. PE 19 5TA

Email : claret_centre@claret.org.uk

May 4th—8th Sr. Anne McCarthy RSCJ Retreat: *Responding to our call, `a call of love`.*

June 23rd—24th Conference on Consecrated Life 2015 in Hayes *Joyful Encounter of Consecrated Persons from the UK and Ireland*

July 27th—31st St. Clare`s FMM House Team Seminar: *Hero`s Journey and Religious Life*

September 11th—13th Fr. Diarmuid O`Murchu MSC Seminar: *Revisoning Religious Life for the 21st Century*

Conference of Religious Scotland

9th May St. Saviour`s Hall, Govan, Glasgow — speaker Fr. Tony Byrne ssp and Sr. Kathleen Maguire

17th October — Jesuit Centre, Lauriston, Edinburgh — speaker Fr. E.Mulcahy ss

CHECK OUT THE WEBSITE www.ukreligiouslife.org for other events

If you know of any events happening in your Diocese or local area please email : annsullivan@sellypark.org or secretary@sellypark.org

Thank you to all those who have contributed to this Newsletter.