

CONFERENCE *of* RELIGIOUS

England & Wales

# ANNUAL REPORT 2017



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## **EXECUTIVE MEMBERS**

**PRESIDENT: Father Paul Smyth CMF**

**VICE PRESIDENT: Sister Kitty Ellard IJS**

**Sister Philomena Bowers RSM**

**Brother Laurence Hughes FSC**

**Father Terry Madden M. Afr**

**Sister Jane Maltby RSCJ**

**Father Robert Marsh OSA**

**Sister Margo Murphy RNDM**

**Sister Frances Orchard CJ**

**Father Martin Shipperlee OSB**

**Sr Sue Berry CSF, Associate Member  
Anglican Representative**

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# THE CONFERENCE OF RELIGIOUS IN ENGLAND AND WALES

## CYNHADLEDD CREFYDDWYR LLOEGR A CHYMRU

### Our Mission

The Conference of Religious seeks to be a dynamic and proactive presence of Church, particularly with those on the margins of society.

It aims:

- To unite its membership in collaborative initiatives translating gospel vision into reality
- To offer support to those in positions of leadership.

### Our Purpose

The purpose of the Conference of Religious in England and Wales is to represent the leaders of religious life.

This representation happens in two main ways:

#### 1. **Supporting our Leaders**

We encourage collaboration among leaders on major issues facing religious today and promote programmes for future formation.

#### 2. **Speaking to Society**

We aim to address current issues from a Catholic perspective, acting as a prophetic voice on behalf of religious.

### Our Members

The Conference of Religious in England and Wales exists for the benefit of all religious in these countries. Its formal membership however is limited to the Major Superiors of each institute or in the case of his/her temporary absence, to an officially appointed delegate.

# REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2017

We are pleased to present the Annual Report to the members of the Conference of Religious (COR).. Members are asked to read the annual report in the Audited Accounts as a complement to this Annual Report.

## Review of Activities during the Year

The task for the future is to promote a wider understanding of the ministry undertaken by Religious over the past 50 years which has had such a profound impact on the fabric of society up until the present time; while at the same time, recognising the profound social, economic and political changes within the wider society and inevitably within religious life itself. There has been rapid transformation in religious life resulting from these changing demographics in the early part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century; in some cases growth, in others the diminishment of many religious congregations. Religious are faced with new and complex apostolic challenges on both a national and international scale. Financial security is essential in the light of all these demographic changes and retirement, and healthcare needs are a significant focus for so many on a practical level. There is a growing awareness by congregations to make provision for a 'Legacy' so that their particular charism is continued on these shores.

A major aim of the Conference is to help Religious face their challenges together, through development of collaborative and networking initiatives, providing strength and support through unity.

Religious also face the contemporary needs of keeping up to date with relevant legal policies related to matters of migration, ethics morality, and being informed of policies and procedures pertaining to issues of safeguarding for children and vulnerable adults. In their ministerial role they meet the needs of multicultural, multi-faith communities as well as facing the growth of secularism. Members frequently ask the question "*how can we demonstrate that the world will be a better place because we are here?*" An important aspect of the conference is to facilitate the 'voice of Religious' being heard in all echelons of society. It is of paramount importance that the vulnerable and those in need are cared for by society and that especially those called to a religious vocation are at the forefront of response.

The General Secretary has worked closely in this year to facilitate the work of the conference under the direction of the President and Executive (Trustees). The Executive try to meet at least five times during their term of office. They bring with them invaluable leadership and people skills which they use in deciding the signs of the times for congregations.

The Trustees are committed to assisting the membership in the manner in which they live their fruitful lives in this country and their outreach in other countries. The many affiliated groups and lobbying agencies assist the conference in attending to this mission. The 'Strategic Plan' is still to be fully implemented and is discussed periodically at meetings. It is recognised that the Conference will have to be adaptive in its leadership and management structure if its future is to be secure. The Executive are aware of the challenges that the secretariat face with a small office staff.

There is a strong desire by the membership that the 'voice' of religious women and men is heard in England of Wales so that their contribution to civil society and those most in need is represented and recognised. This part of the Strategic Plan has proved difficult to fully implement. However, there is discussion with specialists in the area of media which we hope will come to fruition in the following year.

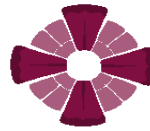
The Trustees have further reviewed the current Strategic Plan, this was in conjunction with a member wide survey, to ascertain the requirements of them and reflect clearly the membership's desire. Further work will be undertaken in the next year.

## THE MIXED COMMISSION



### CBCEW

*Archbishop Bernard Longley*  
*Archbishop of Birmingham*  
*Bishop Declan Lang*  
*Bishop of Clifton*  
*Bishop Alan Williams*  
*Bishop of Brentwood*  
*Robert Byrne C.O.*  
*Auxiliary Bishop of Birmingham*  
*Fr Chris Thomas*  
*General Secretary – CBCEW*



### COREW

*Fr Paul Smyth CMF*  
*President of COR*  
*Sr Kitty Ellard IJS*  
*Vice-President of COR*  
*Abbess Joanna Jamison OSB*  
*Association of British Contemplatives*  
*Abbot Erik Varden*  
*of Mount St Bernard Abbey*  
*Sr Francis Orchard CJ*  
*COR Executive*  
*Br James Boner OFM Cap*  
*General Secretary - COR*

### Mixed Commission

The Mixed Commission is made up of five members from the CBCEW and five members from COR, ABC (Association of British Contemplatives) and UMS (Union of Monastic Superiors). They meet together with the general secretaries from both Conferences managing the administrative aspects of the meetings. This enables co-ordinated discussion on significant matters within the Church, between the Religious and the bishops in England and Wales.

In its meetings it has discussed issues of common concern, including the role of

- Vicars for Religious,
- Consecrated virgins
- Points based Migration
- Pastoral Support Service (NCSC)
- CC-IICSA
- Protocol for Religious entering England and Wales
- National Office of Vocations

***“This is important: to get to know people, listen, expand the circle of ideas. The world is crisscrossed by roads that come closer together and move apart, but the important thing is that they lead towards the Good”. Pope Francis.***



## **UNITED KINGDOM VETTING & IMMIGRATION**

The Conference has continued to monitor the development of the points-based system and its effects on the movement of Religious from overseas undertaking ministry in England and Wales. This has developed to include direct advice and 'Level One' administrative support by a member of the COR staff to COR leaders applying for sponsorship.

The Conference of Religious also has a role as verifier to demonstrate that applicants for sponsorship are 'bona fide' Roman Catholic congregations of Religious, and sends a letter of authorisation to the Home Office to this effect, validated for each individual by the General Secretary of COR. Many Religious Congregations have been assisted by the COR Secretariat to become official sponsors. It is recognised that there is a growing trend to invite Religious from other countries to assist and enhance religious ministerial outreach. The Trustees are kept abreast of the developments in this field and seek to positively help all those requiring assistance. There has been substantial changes to the provision of Tier 2 and Tier 5 which have been clearly monitored by the Executive. The Executive are aware that this is an increasing difficult area to navigate and have recourse to professional advice.

UKVI website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration>

## **HEALTHCARE AND SOCIAL CARE ADVISORY GROUP**

The General Secretary belongs to the Healthcare Reference Group set up by the Bishops' Conference (CBCEW), and this enables COR to be involved collaboratively with them in joint Healthcare initiatives. They organise a Healthcare Conference bi-annually on topics of interest to members.

The Healthcare Committee remains an outstanding example of provision of guidance to members on all matters to do with health, including legal advice. The Committee draws upon the expertise of the Director of Public Health in Hertfordshire, the services of IBB Lawyers, and the voluntary support of regional matron managers. The committee keeps the Conference up to date with any change in Government Policy that affects the life and structures of religious congregations. They are involved with the Government to keep faith at the centre of the lives of those in care and in the hospital environment. They have lobbied on behalf of Religious and the church to maintain the position of chaplains in the care sector. The group meets four times per year.

## **EXECUTIVE ADVISORY SAFEGUARDING GROUP – EASG**

Since the last Report to the Conference, membership of the Executive Advisory Safeguarding Group (EASG) has remained the same but 2018 will see some changes as long serving members hand over to new people to continue the work. Preparations for this are in hand already and, on behalf of all the members of EASG, I would like to take this opportunity to thank, in particular, Mrs Eileen Campling who will be handing over the reigns as her term of office comes to an end. She has given unstintingly of her time, energy and expertise in the work of Safeguarding for many years, and will be continuing with some of this in her work with congregations. However, as she moves on from EASG we wish her every blessing for the future.

The focus of much of the work of EASG in the past year has been, and continues to be on the Religious Safeguarding Representatives. One thing that became very apparent early on was an awareness that Religious SG Representatives have been thought of as comparable to or equivalent to Parish Representatives in the overall Church Safeguarding Structure but that this is far from true. On the whole, Religious SG Representatives would carry much more responsibility and could find themselves leading on most of the Safeguarding matters within a congregation. Some thought and some discussion with CSAS about this has resulted in an agreed change of title to Religious Safeguarding Lead (rather than Representative) so we are currently trying to implement the change and to explain why as necessary.

The two major Safeguarding Seminars for Religious Safeguarding Representatives, mentioned in the 2016/2017 Report, surfaced a strong request for some form of networking and support for those in this crucial role where one can sometimes feel very isolated. EASG has responded by organising four day meetings in Salford, London, Birmingham and York during autumn 2017 and early 2018, with the intention of helping to organise a number of fairly local, self-sustaining groups to enable networking and support for Religious Safeguarding Leads. In the wake of those four meetings there are now eight Networking and Support Groups established around the country and EASG is continuing to offer help to arrange more if these are required.

In order to further resource this Role, a small working group has been trying to clarify the roles and responsibilities undertaken by those who are in this position in each congregation. This work has highlighted the vast differences that exist in how this role operates in different circumstances, according to the requirements of different congregations. Nevertheless, the working group is nearing completion of this piece of work and hopes to have something ready for early Autumn.

EASG has been aware of some concerns around the relationship of religious with safeguarding commissions in some dioceses. On revisiting what was involved in the original Alignment Agreement, and what our lived experience has been since 2011, it became apparent that some updating would be really helpful to all concerned. CoR Executive has suggested to CSAS that a formal review be undertaken and we understand that this process will shortly commence.

EASG fully supports the concept of a One Church approach to Safeguarding and this includes the initiative from the Bishop's Conference and the Conference of Religious to ask every Congregational Leader and their Trustee Body/Bodies to sign a formal agreement indicating their willingness to abide by the National Policies and Procedures for Safeguarding in the Catholic Church. The importance of this, not least in the face of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), is not to be underestimated.

### **Members:**

Sr Lyndsay Spendelow RSM (Chair)  
Fr Richard Yeo OSB  
Br James Boner OFM (Cap) (General Secretary)  
Sr Philomena McClusky FMSJ  
Fr Martin Shiperlee OSB

Mrs Eileen Campling  
Sr Clare Smith RSM  
Sr Frances Cullen CSFN  
Bro Laurence Hughes FSC



## **INDEPENDENT INQUIRY INTO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE (IICSA)**

The Catholic Council for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (CCIICSA), chaired by Baroness Nuala O'Loan, has continued to engage fully with the Inquiry. The Executive is kept fully up to date with the progress of the Inquiry and any impacts on religious congregations.

A considerable part of the Work of the CCIICSA is to support members of the Catholic Church who have been requested to submit documents, make statements or appear before the Inquiry Panel, and to co-ordinate responses to the Inquiry's requirements so as to avoid multiple duplications of information submitted.

Members of the CCIICSA have undertaken to be present at all the sessions of hearings held so far by the Inquiry. It is hoped that this is recognised as an indication of the Catholic Church's commitment to engaging positively with the process of the Inquiry as well as being an active support for those called to speak before the Inquiry Panel. The Child Migration Programmes and the English Benedictine Congregation were case studies last year and the Archdiocese of Birmingham case study will begin later this year.

Further information and Reports can be accessed from the IICSA website [www.iicsa.org.uk](http://www.iicsa.org.uk)

### **Members:**

Baroness Nuala O'Loan DBE (Chair)

Bishop Marcus Stock

Fr Richard Yeo OSB

Sr Lyndsay Spendelow RSM

Sr Helen Costigan

Br James Boner OFM (Cap)

Fr Christopher Thomas

Fr Christopher Jamieson OSB

Mgr Gordon Read

Dr Colette Limbrick

# ANNUAL REPORT 2018

NOV REPORT BY SR ELAINE PENRICE FSP



## YOUTH FAITH AND VOCATIONAL DISCERNMENT

The report on Youth, Faith and Vocational Discernment is due to be published in Feb 2018. Copies will be available to purchase on [www.ukvocation.org](http://www.ukvocation.org) soon after.

This document is the fruit of the questionnaire sent out to young people and those who work with young people, with questions based on those in the preparatory document for the synod. The report is the result of the collaboration of the Office for Evangelisation and the National Office for Vocation. It gives us all an opportunity to hear for ourselves what young people wanted to communicate to the Church, and will give us an important insight to our work in vocations ministry.

## **VOCATIONS SUNDAY 22nd APRIL 2018**

### **It's Your Call**

The theme of this year is: It's Your Call.

The poster this year aims to reflect the way the Church is moving: putting young people at the centre of faith and vocational discernment. This is why young people are the focus of the image, rather than showing the various specific ordained or religious vocations. The prayer card is printed without the Vocations Sunday logo on it so we could use them throughout the year... thinking specifically of the Eucharistic Congress.

11 dioceses and 3 religious communities ordered NOV Vocations Sunday resources this year. We notified all our vocations directors and universities that the posters and prayer card files are available to download from [www.ukvocation.org](http://www.ukvocation.org) and are free to anyone wishing to organise printing for themselves.

## **INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR RELIGIOUS VOCATIONS PERSONNEL**



NOV attended the international congress for religious vocations personnel in Rome (Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum) organised by the Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life. Several other religious from the UK and Ireland were also present. This was an opportunity for religious to concretely influence the synod on Youth, Faith and Vocational Discernment which will take place later this year. We were over 700 delegates from all over the world, who met in smaller continental groups and separated into language groups. These groups shared on the topics brought up by the keynote speakers, and our daily experience of working in vocations ministry. The groups were asked to put forward proposals regarding the issues on “vocation”, and proposals on “vocations to Consecrated Life”, that we would like to see discussed in the synod. The congregation promised to put the talks on youtube but we have had no information on that or on the final report.

Many of the UK and Ireland participants gathered together one lunchtime for an informal meeting.

One of the items we discussed was Vocations Sunday. Aware that in many parishes Vocations Sunday gets lost in asking for funds to support diocesan priests, we concluded that it would be good to use the week preceding Vocations Sunday to heighten awareness of vocation. We were aware that there was not much time to organise things in time for 2018 but we hope to be able to make a more concerted push in 2019, where we can use the momentum of the synod and its impetus in vocational discernment. In the short term, NOV offered vocations directors help in designing posters for this, and reminded them that we are happy to advertise vocations events throughout the year on our website [www.UKreligiouslife.org](http://www.UKreligiouslife.org). We hope this will help congregations become more visible, especially in the week leading up to Vocations Sunday.

The National Religious Vocations Personnel conference 2017 was attended by 75 religious. We had Fr Nicholas Crowe OP and Sr Lynne Baron FCJ come to share in some of their practical experience in vocations work today. The conference was greatly appreciated; sometimes the thing that is needed most can be learned from each other, and both these religious have lots of experience to share. The fact that many of us have had little experience recently because of the scarcity of interest makes this a wonderful way to keep ourselves updated on what works with today's young people.

The NRVP 2018 conference will be in the hall of Our Lady of Victories, Kensington, London, on Saturday the 3rd of November. We hope that this meeting will also be an opportunity to learn practical skills and also to network with other vocations personnel.



## **GOD CALLS APP**

After about 2 years work, our God Calls app has been completed and is available for download free on the apple and android platforms. A temporary website has been produced to help promote it and it has been widely publicised in the press and social media, as well as through the media office at the bishop's conference. People have shown interest from all over the world including the USA, Vietnam and Australia!

The general feedback is very positive, and has around 1,400 downloads in the first month from the apple store and more from the android store too.

**One very good thing about the app is the ability for religious to upload their vocations events directly to the app (of course our editor will check to make sure these are legitimate events), so that young people from 18-35 can easily find out about where they can go for discernment events.**

## NATIONAL YOUTH SUNDAY

NOV worked in collaboration with the office for Evangelisation to prepare a short video for young people, and another one for priests. It suggested priests invite young people to an informal meal in their homes, and young people to welcome the invitation. The aim was to encourage young people to have contact with their church and so to begin a listening relationship. The theme of the video was directly informed by some of the things we learned from the Mega Youth Poll. You can still see the videos on the website.

Responsibility for National Youth Sunday has now moved to the office for Evangelisation.

[www.nationalyouthsunday.org.uk](http://www.nationalyouthsunday.org.uk)



The Called Beyond week has completed the pilot phase with much success. It was welcomed as a good thing for the parish.

Called Beyond is designed to be a parish- based project. This means that religious communities who run parishes may request a training day. Because of the cost of running the training it is necessary that groups of about 10 parishes sign up together, which is why the diocesan vocations director should be contacted if you wish to run a Called Beyond vocations week in your parish. As far as we are aware, about half of the dioceses in England & Wales said they might be interested in running Called Beyond sometime in the future.

The plan is to run Called Beyond training twice a year – in June and January. This is because it takes about 4 months of organisation after the training to get ready. The training will be run by NOV at the moment, because the project is still establishing itself, but the hope is that in the future parishes who have run the week will be able to help train other parishes.

There are a few things to be expanded in the manual, and perhaps a page on the website with testimonies to people's experience. Training videos are also in production to help future teams.

NOV would strongly encourage any religious to take the opportunity to participate in these events if they are invited to do so.

Some of the feedback from the pilot parishes was the difficulty in getting the religious to help. This project was born of professional research, which suggested that young people find it difficult to encounter priests and religious. Called Beyond is specifically designed to raise awareness that we all have a vocation, and to enable people to explore the Lord's call in a non- threatening environment.

If you are interested in knowing more, visit the website: [www.calledbeyond.org.uk](http://www.calledbeyond.org.uk).

If you would like to watch the introductory video, see the About tab you will be asked for a password to watch, which is written at the bottom of the page.

[www.calledbeyond.org.uk](http://www.calledbeyond.org.uk)

## **SAMUEL GROUPS**

Interest in Samuel groups seems to be lessening. Part of the reason is the difficulty people have in committing to a monthly meeting over several consecutive months.

When we spoke about this with the religious at the conference in Rome, other countries in Europe had the same experience... that Samuel went strong for about 10 or 12 years, and then interest diminished. We cancelled the London Samuel group this year because of lack of interest, and the Liverpool group decided to continue to hold meetings, but not as a Samuel group. NOV does not control Samuel groups so there may be groups running which we are not aware of.

We would like to explore the possibilities of creating a model for a new kind of discernment group. Once we gather some advisers and build the model, we will make it available freely.

The Samuel manual will still be available free of charge to anybody who requests it. If you need a manual you can request one from [enquiries@ukvocation.org](mailto:enquiries@ukvocation.org)

## **VOCATIONS GUIDE COURSE**

NOV will run another full version of the Vocations Guide course this year 30th / 31st May and 27th / 28th June, in Milleret House in Kensington, London.

This will be the last opportunity to do the course in Milleret House because it will be closing. NOV is considering alternative locations for next year, including the possibility of running a course in Birmingham or Leeds.

NOV has 88 trained guides, and 9 people requested a vocation guide in 2017. We did have to turn one person down because we did not have a guide near her location.

## **BAD HABITS HOLY ORDERS**

NOV helped advise a television company in their production of a short series for Ch5. The sisters who took most time with the young women were the Daughters of Divine Charity, who found the experience very positive. Social media after the show was buzzing with people who would like a "nun friend like that". The young women themselves found it a life changing experience and came away with real affection and gratitude towards the sisters.

## **NOV STAFF**

The staff currently working at the National Office for Vocation are Sr Elaine Penrice FSP, Religious Life Promoter, and Juliet Chiosso, Office Administrator.

NOV has been without a Discipleship Promoter since November 2016, and has been without a Director since September 2017.

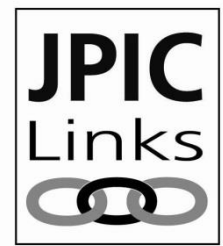
We do not know when a new director will be appointed, but the Bishops' Conference does intend to fill these posts as soon as possible.

Feb 2018



# JPIC Links

## Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation



In his homily for 2018 Day for Consecrated Life Pope Francis said that at Candlemass we “celebrate the Lord who enters the Temple and comes to encounter his people” He continues, “In the Christian East, this feast is called the “Feast of Encounter”: it is the encounter between God, who became a child to bring newness to our world, and an expectant humanity, represented by the elderly man and woman in the Temple.” He reminds us that, for religious men and women, “Everything started in an encounter with the Lord.” But that “we have to remember that we can never renew our encounter with the Lord without others”.

I think this sums up something of what JPIC Links is about. We rejoice in supporting each other through our contacts, celebrating our actions and encouraging each other when times are difficult. Most of all we rejoice in the times when we get together at the Links organised events of ‘Linking day’ and our AGM and weekend conference as well as other times when we meet socially or for lobbying, talks and advocacy days. These are all times when we renew our encounter with the Lord and others.

Our AGM and Conference was held in High Leigh conference centre, Hoddesdon 24 – 26 March 2017. The weekend was attended by 35 people and was facilitated by Tina Beattie with the title, ‘Half the sky – Holding up and holding on’. Tina’s opening remarks on the Friday night set the scene for an energising weekend of hope that re-charged our spiritual batteries. Quoting Rebecca Solnit who in her piece, ‘Hope in the dark’ to hope is to give yourself to the future – and that commitment to the future is what makes the present inhabitable”. The weekend was punctuated by time for reflection and silence as Tina commented, ‘Silence is like plugging in and being re-charged by God’.

On Saturday morning we began by reflecting on Psalm 139 we were invited to, ‘discover ourselves anew in our relationship with God’, to ‘take what you are meant to be given and ‘rest in whatever finds a space in you’. Tina spoke of the spirituality of St Catherine of Siena and the theology of a ‘porous self’ or the self as a sponge whereby as our senses absorb the world it awakens our desire which then gets processed and emanates as love.

In Tina’s second session she spoke of discovering the community anew and shared some shocking facts about equality, eg of 188 directly elected leaders, only 16 are women. It is staggering that the world spends four times the amount of money on research into erectile dysfunction than it does on maternal and newborn health. (A woman dies every 90 seconds in pregnancy and childbirth) Tina shared the poem, ‘The Journey’ by Mary Oliver illustrated by a youtube video. Following the video we each took a ball of wool from the ‘focus’ in the middle of the room and reflected on the meaning of the poem for us. After the video, we broke into small groups in which each of us shared where we could see ourselves in the poem. We

then threw our ball of wool to another person, thus creating a ‘web or network of sharing’. At the end we returned to the main room and added our ‘web’ to the display. Tina spoke about the relationship of love in the Trinity and how love is our true identity, “Life” she said “is a revolution of love. Tina concluded by showing us a picture of a cracked bowl with the cracks highlighted in gold demonstrating the Japanese practice of Kintsukuroi whereby broken pottery is repaired with laquer mixed with gold or silver. It is part of Wabi-Sabi or the embrace of the flawed or imperfect. “There is a crack in everything – that’s how the light gets in. “Grace” she concluded, “heals our wounds with gold”.

JPIC Linking day was held on Saturday 7th October 2017 at St Aloysius Church Hall, Euston with the title, ‘Framing a Different Narrative – (The Arms Trade in a Changing Political Landscape)’ 40

members attended the conference which was facilitated by three lifelong peace activists: Bruce Kent, Valerie Flessati, and Henrietta Cullinan.

The day began with prayer and a hymn and ended with a Eucharist. In between we watched short videos, listened to short presentations, did some myth busting exercises, read some accounts of successful non-violent action in other countries, and put our various questions to Bruce, Valerie and Henrietta. Among many things we learned and discussed, we were reminded of the fact that war is deeply intertwined with many other issues that Christians are naturally concerned about including poverty, justice, human rights, animal welfare, and care of creation. We shared some good news including that this year's Nobel Peace Prize had been awarded to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons.

We were reminded of the importance of the UN Charter and how this needs to be better known. The security council of the UN is the only body that can enforce peace we should be looking at ways of strengthening the UN. We were reminded that the original intention of the Just War principle was to avoid excessive violence whereas in reality it has tended to be used to justify combat. It was suggested to us that now would be a good time to let go of the Just War principle and to allow ourselves to think outside the box. We heard how a study has shown that armed combat has a 27% success rate when it comes to resolving conflict and bringing about stability, whereas non-violent action has a 54% success rate. We read together some non-violent success stories and used them as case studies for learning what attitudes and practical actions are needed in order to attain peaceful conflict resolution. If the world can end apartheid, then it can certainly end war. One of the most striking was the phrase, 'maybe we should be funding 'fun'? Music brings people together and strengthens their solidarity, while one of the most striking images used was of Martin McGuinness and Ian Paisley chuckling together. They, (it was suggested) were prepared to step outside of the past and this flowered into a genuine friendship.

It was also brought to our awareness just how entrenched warfare is in our culture, from regular arms fairs being held in our country as if nothing was unusual about that, to cadet force afternoons being part of the formation of many school pupils.

Perhaps the most important part of the day was discussing what practical and manageable things we as churches and individual Christians could do in working for peace. One of the suggestions aimed at churches was that they made sure not to avoid or neglect the subjects of violence and war when focussing on connected issues such as poverty or human rights or the environment. Simple practical suggestions included things like putting the United Nations Charter on a church notice board or website.

In his address to religious this year Pope Francis spoke of the need for 'dreams and prophecies'. Religious, third order members and Associates have continued to have the courage to 'prophetically carry on those dreams'. Across the UK we are working to promote Inter-faith dialogue with a commitment to multi faith programmes. Committed to the Global Goals and determined to, 'leave no one behind' we continue our advocacy work in speaking 'truth to power' engaging with parliamentarians in meetings, letter writing and lobbying. Last October several of us were at the lobby day on the International Day for the Eradication of poverty and spoke to a variety of parliamentarians from both houses.

We have used our voices to write letters, articles and opinion editorials in online newspapers and blogs as well as the local and international press. We have attended marches and demonstrations and performed actions to address the injustice of war and the arms trade. We continue to welcome refugees and asylum seekers who are suffering from the effects of war and injustice and many have opened their homes to asylum seekers. Some continue to support Br Johannes at the Catholic Worker house in Calais – and several brothers have spent time there. We are working in Renate and Bakhita house with those who are trafficked and are working to reinstate just employment laws for Migrant domestic workers. We continue to support the work of the Africa European Faith and Justice



Network, (AEFJN) National Justice and Peace Network, (NJPN) Aid to the Church in Need, CAFOD, Pax Christi and Caritas.

Many of our members are involved in Environment initiatives and promoting sustainable living through initiatives such as 'EcoChurch', 'Ecohomes' and 'Live Simply'. Some are partners of A Rocha, (a Christian charity working for the protection and restoration of the natural world). Communities are supporting organic farms, environment projects and heating their buildings with biomass, solar and wind power as well as campaigning with environmental charities.

#### Permanent People's Tribunal

We are involved with the Permanent People's Tribunal (PPT) which was established in 1980 as an internationally recognised Opinion Tribunal. Since 1980 it has held sessions on a range of political and economic issues including dictatorships in Latin America, Philippines, East Timor, the World Bank and others. It also held a series of Hearings on European Transnational Corporations (TNC's) and their operation in Latin America which has led to a global campaign to establish a Binding Treaty at the UN on TNC's and Human Rights.

A number of well established organisations in Europe have submitted a petition to the PPT to hold a session of the Tribunal with the aim of identifying and judging the chain of co-responsibility for the violations of migrant and refugee rights committed all along the migration route between Europe and other countries and seeking urgent access to justice. Consequently the current Session of the PPT was launched in Barcelona in July 2017. Since then two Hearings have been held in Palermo, and in

Paris. The next Hearings are scheduled to be held in May in Barcelona and in the UK in November. It is also planned to have a Hearing in Morocco in December.

The process is undertaken together with the peoples most involved and directly affected, migrant and refugee organisations and communities.

Already involved in this, JPIC Links working group are hoping that other members of JPIC Links will be interested in this initiative. We will share more at our Conference in April and discuss in what ways our membership and congregations can be involved.

And to the future.....

Bearing in mind the words of Pope Francis, (2nd February 2018), "We do well to take up the dreams of our elders, so that we can prophesy in our day and once more encounter what originally set our hearts afire' our next AGM and conference will be at:

High Leigh Conference Centre, 13 – 15 April,

'Renewing the prophetic imagination' (Sustaining creative engagement) – David McLoughlin.

Linking Day is 6th October 2018 at St Aloysius Church Hall Euston and will be on the theme of 'Poverty in the UK'. The day will be facilitated by Paul Hackman from the Church Urban Fund.

Our 2019 Conference and AGM will be 5 – 7 April 2019 at High Leigh Conference Centre. Please see COR web site for more details of all these events – all are welcome.

Finally we would like to invite other religious Congregations to join JPIC Links – Together we can 'dream dreams and gain the courage to prophetically carry out those dreams'.

**Sister Gillian Price**  
**March 2018**



## RELIGIOUS LIFE INSTITUTE ANNUAL REPORT 2017



**RLI FUTURE STRUCTURES:** The RLI celebrates its 10th anniversary this year. With the closure of Heythrop its administrative and academic hub transfer to the Margaret Beaufort Institute of Theology in Cambridge from summer 2018. The move to MBIT will greatly benefit the RLI's research activities and will also be part of the expansion of MBIT which celebrates its 25th anniversary next year. MBIT was founded in collaboration with the Conference of Religious of England & Wales, so this return to roots is particularly welcome as MBIT seeks to expand its provision for religious as an effective and fruitful resource for individuals as well as for the wider international body. This and the international research projects has also brought about closer collaboration with the Union of International Superiors General (UISG) in Rome. The RLI will continue to be self-funding.

The **THEOLOGY OF RELIGIOUS LIFE COURSE** has run successfully in 2018 as a non-credit-bearing module at Heythrop. The RLI is actively considering provision of online resources for life-long learning for religious.

**VITALITY PROJECT:** Research at national and international levels continues, funded by the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation over three years from June 2016 to May 2019. This consists of:

- 1) A study of new and potential entrants to women's religious life in the UK & Ireland since 2000
- 2) A study of the sustainability of religious life of women in East and Central Africa implemented in partnership with local researchers/religious sisters

The Co-Directors of the research are Prof. Paul Murray (Durham University), Dr Gemma Simmonds CJ (RLI, Heythrop College) and Catherine Sexton (MBIT, Cambridge), supported by Dr Maria Calderon Muñoz (Research Assistant) and Yvonne Williams (Project Coordinator). This core team is also supported by an Academic Advisory Group who meet twice each year. Each of the seven members of the Academic Advisory Group has an international academic reputation and brings a wealth and depth of expertise to complement that of the team.

**UK and Ireland:** Gemma Simmonds leads on this project with the research question: Is religious life as currently lived by women religious in the UK and Ireland liveable for new members? Can it attract new members, or are structural and ideological changes necessary to make it translatable and fit for purpose for new generations? Our hope is to offer congregations the understanding needed to make better-informed decisions about possible future membership or the choice no longer to pursue or accept new vocations. The number of enquirers and entrants to the orders is small but there has been a heartening response from within the UK. 67 women have made contact, 33% of whom are Anglican, and 67% Catholic and it is hoped to include more from the contemplative orders. Response to the Project in Ireland has been very low. Several reasons for this have been identified, but fruitful material will be extracted from the replies that we are receiving. Responses are from individuals with complete anonymity. Given the aim of the research, it is important to represent the views of congregations. Our next task is to invite all congregations – whether participants or not – to answer general questions about their experiences of vocations ministry and formation.

**East and Central Africa:** Project leader - Catherine Sexton. In order to strengthen ownership, sisters working as Project Support Assistants are being appointed in each participant country, while working closely through the various National Associations. The Co-Directors and Research Assistant have led presentations in Zambia, Kenya, Uganda, Malawi and Tanzania and have also worked with congregations' leadership teams. In August 2017 they attended the international conference of the Association of Consecrated Women in Eastern and Central Africa (ACWECA) in Tanzania at which Gemma Simmonds gave an address. Across the participating countries, 57 congregations have responded, with 508 sisters already enrolled and considering the research question:

What are sisters saying is the essence of women's Religious Life in Africa today and into the future? What are the key challenges that hinder this essence? What are the best practices for ensuring the understanding & living of it, and the communication of this to sisters in formation?

In addition to the high participation among sisters which endorses the timely nature and relevance of the project, there is considerable interest in this research from: The Global Sisters Report [GSR] and the International Union of Superiors General [UISG].

Conference presentations by Catherine Sexton: "Theological Action Research: Influence, Impact and Iterations" held at St Katherine's Conference Centre, London. Catherine has also been invited to Rome in April 2018 to work with the Leadership team of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus (SHCJ) on the future of religious life in Africa and also to accompany a large group of 18 US and African Dominican congregations with the Needs Assessment stage of their project 'Futuring our Dominican Charism'.

Theological Reflection: An important part of both studies is the theological reflection on the findings. Perspectives from other disciplines (history, sociology, anthropology, women's studies) will also be sought to see how they might vary the view of the data.

STUDY DAYS: Dr. Clara Kreis, a psychologist and Divine Providence sister working in Duquesne University, USA, gave a well-attended day in autumn 2017 on her research into life satisfaction among Catholic apostolic women religious.

CONFERENCE 2018: A major two-day conference on charisms is being planned for OCTOBER 12-13 2018 at HEYTHROP COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON. The conference will bring together for the first time Catholic and Anglican Religious and members of the New Monastic communities that are emerging within the Church of England as well as members of ecclesial movements within the Catholic church.

The key findings of the Religious Life Vitality Project made clear that a major question among Catholic women religious of apostolic congregations is the passing on of their charism to future generations who may not all be vowed members. New Monastic communities are emerging who are basing their life on elements of traditional religious life. There are signs of the work of the Holy Spirit here but where the signs are leading is not always clear. A conversation between members of historical religious congregations and those hearing a call to community, prayer and apostolic ministry will enrich the lives of both, oriented towards a future full of hope. This conference will include key addresses and opportunities for reflection, discussion and networking.

Directors's Activities: The Director of the RLI is Gemma Simmonds CJ. In the last year she has worked with religious in the UK and Ireland at diocesan and province assemblies of religious and with the Heythrop Institute of Religion and Society reflecting on the continuing role of religious congregations in schools of their foundation. She has given keynote addresses and input at conferences of religious and their lay colleagues in Malawi, South Africa, Tanzania (for the Association of Consecrated Women of Eastern and Central Africa, [ACWECA] and the UK. She has represented the RLI in a conference call with the UISG on behalf of the Global Sisterhood Initiative and given input to the Inter-congregational Novices' course UK. She continues to work on behalf of the RLI as a trustee of the Community of St. Anselm at Lambeth Palace.

The RLI offers heartfelt thanks to the members of its Steering Committee who have supported and enabled its work since its inception. Without them the work of the RLI could not have continued over the past ten years. The current committee members are:

Benedict Foy (De la Salle Brothers)  
Margaret O'Shea (Poor Servants of the Mother of God)  
Martin Poulson (Salesians of Dom Bosco)  
Paul Rout (Franciscan)  
Gemma Simmonds (Congregation of Jesus)  
Catherine Skelton (Daughters of St Paul)  
Kate Stogdon (Cenacle)  
Ms. Annabel Clarkson (Heythrop College) is the RLI administrator

**Gemma Simmonds CJ, Director, Religious Life Institute**

**March 2018**



A Light Shining in a Dark Place of Human Trafficking

## REPORT FOR THE 2018 CONFERENCE OF RELIGIOUS (ENGLAND AND WALES)



### **New CEO Garry Smith**

A new Chief Executive is to head a leading modern slavery & human trafficking charity, providing safe housing and practical support to victims nationwide.

Having spent over 20 years working at a senior level in the charity sector, Garry Smith has extensive experience in the field and will focus on driving forward the charity's aims of supporting victims and survivors affected by modern slavery & human trafficking.

Starting his new role, Garry Smith said: "The Medaille Trust has in its short history grown to be one of the largest providers of specialist safe house beds for victims of modern slavery in the world and has a fine reputation of rolling up its sleeves and working very effectively with the people directly affected by this heinous crime. As such I am immensely proud and grateful to be given the opportunity to lead the organisation in the next phase of its development."

He continues: "I am passionate in my belief that more must be done to support the victims of this heinous crime and that every person affected by this should receive the highest quality care, enabling them to live an independent life, free from the invisible chains of modern slavery."

We would very much like to hear from anyone wishing to help us in our mission.

### **Our Mission**

The Medaille Trust is a charity founded by groups of Religious congregations in 2006 to work against the evils of human trafficking in response to the plight of thousands of people who are being trafficked into the UK each year.

The Trust has been a significant provider of support and safe house provision for the victims of human trafficking since then and continues to deliver outstanding care ten years on.

The primary mission of The Medaille Trust is the empowerment of women, men and children, who have been freed from the human-trafficking and the modern day slavery industry in the UK, enabling them to regain their dignity and self-worth. We do this by providing safe housing and offering opportunities for physical and psychological healing, rehabilitation and protection to the victims in our care.

Since 2006 the Trust continues to grow and meet the needs of the increasing number of victims identified in the UK. Now, 10 years on The Medaille Trust operate from 7 safe houses offering a total of 61 bed spaces to women, men and children. Our current range of safe house provision offers 3 dedicated women's houses, 3 male houses and 1 specialist family centre. With our range of safe houses located across the country the trust can offer a warm and safe home with a loving team of staff to assist with the 1st stage of the victim's recovery.

Please go to their website: [www.medaille-trust.org.uk](http://www.medaille-trust.org.uk) for the latest update

## **Missionary Sisters' Committee – Mission Appeals**

The Committee is composed of major superiors or representatives of the Institutes of Religious Sisters having members working overseas, especially in various part of the world that are still developing and ravaged by war and natural disasters. We have one sister on the Executive Board – Sr Assumpta Giertych, to represent the Committee and who on our behalf attends Executive Board Meetings.

Other members of our group who attend meetings relating to our work and the ministry of Mission Awareness continue to report appropriately to the committee. In the last two years we lost two communities due to lack of personnel but have welcomed two more members to our committee, the Daughters of Divine Love and the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

In 2017 we fifteen societies gave annual Mission Appeals in parishes in the dioceses of: Archdiocese of Liverpool, Brentwood, Middlesbrough and Shrewsbury, as allocated to us by the arrangements with the bishops. The Appeals help us to promote missionary awareness for all baptised people to be involved in mission as members of a worldwide and local Church. We see mission as our responsibility to work for the establishment of God's reign in our world and to take the good news of Jesus to all: to those who have not heard it or have not seen it relevant. We try to stress that Mission is not only for those working overseas but here at home also. Thus in our talks we mention what they are engaged in here at home, in the parishes especially, care of the elderly concern for the lonely, the sick, and advocacy on behalf of the marginalised and ethical investments, using our purchasing power to challenge unjust societies by raising questions with suppliers and buying fairly traded goods, etc.

We also use our wealth of experience as returned missionaries to highlight the needs of so many unfortunate people who are victims of so many acts of violence and injustice and to try to empower and enable people to defend themselves: to be the new generation for building a better world. Thus our appeals are an important source for us since we have traditionally worked mostly overseas with people who are very poor and therefore cannot support us. In our appeals for funds we all work together, combining the money raised and sharing it out at the end of the year according to the number of appeals we each have made. In this way it makes no difference whether we visit large or small parishes, or even if the collection does not cover our costs if the parish is very small.

We are happy to have the privilege of sharing our first-hand experience of the Missionary Church in different parts of the world. The committee meets twice a year to look together at issues encountered in our overseas work or in our work here, but we also are in contact with each other via email. And more recently, have make avail of the Formation Day for Mission Appeals to keep updated with techniques and advice offered to us from the Executive.

Sr Rose Mary Harbinson ( SMC Chair)

During the year, CARJ has continued to organise a **Traveller Support Network** for Catholics and others working with Gypsy/Roma/Traveller communities and an **Urban Network** for those living and serving in inner cities and outer estates. These national Networks meet regularly and share information and experience by email.

A central part of CARJ's activity continues to be its work with **Schools, Families & Young People in marginalised communities**.

CARJ participates in a number of Catholic, Ecumenical and secular networks and partners with others organisations, including:

- The Christian Network Against Caste Discrimination (CNACD)
- The Churches Network for Gypsies, Travellers and Roma (CNGTR)
- Catholic Social Action Network (CSAN)
- The Runnymede Trust
- The Traveller Movement

Over the past year, CARJ tried to engage its members and friends in a process of **reflection and discernment**. The BREXIT Referendum has highlighted some of the serious divisions in our society. These divisions are set against the background of continuing turmoil in the middle east, the threat of terrorism and many seeking refuge in Europe and the UK. Here at home the gap between the rich and the poor is increasing, many feel left behind, minorities continue to experience discrimination and disadvantage, and there is an increase in hate crime. In the face of this complex local and global challenge, we in CARJ felt it was an appropriate time to pause and reflect. Out of this process of reflection and discernment, we identified a number of vulnerable groups we wish to support, including:

- Migrants, refugees and victims of trafficking
- EU citizens in the wake of Brexit
- Young people in marginalised communities struggling to achieve their full potential
- Muslim communities seeking a full and equal place in society, and those individuals or groups who may be targets of radicalisation
- Families in de-industrialised areas who feel 'left behind'
- Black and minority ethnic groups in the criminal justice system
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities with inadequate site provision
- Victims of caste discrimination in the UK
- Victims of hate crime.

In the coming year, CARJ will continue to develop all our key areas of work as well as responding to the needs of these vulnerable groups and to issues of justice, equality and the common good as they arise in our complex and changing world.

Richard Zipfel  
CARJ Trustee  
1 March 2018



## ASSOCIATION OF PROVINCIAL BURSARS

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The Association of Provincial Bursars (APB), set up by Religious Bursars for Religious Bursars is now in its 35<sup>th</sup> year, still going strong and still as relevant. We have over 200 Full and Associate members who are, in the main, religious Bursars and those charged with bursarial responsibilities within congregations but over the years membership has widened to include Trustees, Delegates and lay bursarial staff. There are also around 50 Friend members i.e. professional firms (bankers, accountants, investment managers, lawyers etc.) who support the work of APB.

2017 saw the well-deserved retirement of Mr Michael Barwick after 13 years' service as the General Secretary and the appointment of Mrs Eileen Head who took over as General Secretary in June.

Although APB is not itself an advice-giving association, one aim is to assist the members by pointing them in the direction of where they can get advice on such diverse subjects as compliance with legislation from the Charity Commission, Public Benefit and Financial Requirements, Governance & Trusteeship, Health & Safety, Employment Law, Safeguarding, Managing Investments and, of course, data protection and GDPR. It also helps members to network amongst themselves and provides access to other matters that impact on the governance and stewardship of their charitable entities.

The Association holds an Annual Conference in High Leigh Conference Centre, Herts, during the first week in October. The conference is very popular with the membership (there is usually a waiting list!) but also with non-member Trustees and delegates too as the speakers cover a variety of interesting topics relevant to religious congregations. The Friends of APB, as well as participating as speakers, also come along en-masse to the 'Market Place' on the Wednesday where the membership has the opportunity to talk to them in an informal setting. The presentations from the conference are made available to the membership on the APB website where they are also able to access the CLAS and other relevant circulars as well as start, or join in with, discussion forums.

A new Executive Committee member, Fr Richard Ounsworth, was elected at the October 2017 AGM and details of all those now serving on the Executive Committee are to be found on our web site [www.apbursars.org.uk](http://www.apbursars.org.uk). APB is grateful for the hard work of members of the Executive Committee who volunteer and give so generously of their time and especially grateful to Sr Pat Trussell LSU, who stepped down in October 17, for her six consecutive years as an Executive Committee member.

Members of CoR who have not already done so, are welcome to join APB by filling in the application form on our website. The membership fee is £50. This also gives access to the members' only area of the website and ensures advance notice about the conference.

Eileen Head  
General Secretary  
February 2018



Office 16, Shakespeare House, 37-39  
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01704 533708

Email: [secretariat@cmu.org.uk](mailto:secretariat@cmu.org.uk)



## 2017 ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE CATHOLIC MISSIONARY UNION OF ENGLAND & WALES

Dear friends,

### **Leadership and strategic Planning**

Since our 2017 Annual General Meeting Bro. John McAllister sm and Fr Kenneth Okoli CSSp have been our President and Vice President respectively. Thanks must go to Fr Terry Donnelly CSSp and Fr Martin Devenish MCCJ who are the out-going office holders. Members of the CMU Executive will meet with CoR Executive during the year to discuss long term mutual interests.

### **Joint Conference**

Since 2015 we have worked with Missio to present a World Mission Conference, last year we had Fr Bator SJ from Nairobi who gave a very interesting talk. With the closure of our venue, Heythrop, we are thinking again on how to engage with audiences on these issues for future years.



### **Giving value to the members**

The CMU has almost 40 members drawn from a range of organisations ranging from the congregations founded for overseas mission to others which have taken up a strong presence in particular overseas countries. We are also including in our membership lay missionary groups and the 'new' missionaries from global South who are present here. Ask about joining us.

In 2016 two 'Working Groups' were developed – one on education and one on the missionary vocation. The education Working Group has overseen a project called 'meet a missionary' to provide input to young people. You can find out more about this project at [www.meetamissionary.org.uk](http://www.meetamissionary.org.uk)

### **New members**

We welcome new members to the Catholic Missionary Union – organisations which place world mission as a part of their work.

### **Liaison with the bishops**

One of the primary purposes of the CMU is to act as a liaison between the missionary community in England & Wales and the bishops. With them, we have been actively involved in the Committee for Overseas Mission and the work to update the guidelines and criteria for mission appeals in parishes.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Richard Owens, Secretary

**2019 National Course for Overseas Clergy      Bookings Now Open**  
**30<sup>th</sup> January to 7<sup>th</sup> February 2019**

We facilitate the above course in partnership with Missio at the request of the Bishops. In 2018 we had 27 participants and the feedback was excellent. It is suitable for your members whether they have been here a few weeks or even over a year. There are lay, religious and clergy facilitators and speakers covering topics as diverse as the law, social trends, customs, safer ministry, family life and much more...£700 fully inclusive

To make a booking [pa@missio.org.uk](mailto:pa@missio.org.uk) . For an enquiry call Richard 0785 275 0082

## ***Annual report to the Conference of Religious***

### ***Your support in action***

February 2018

Your support of CAFOD's general funds gives us the flexibility to act where the need is greatest. Thanks to your generosity, we are helping vulnerable people around the world to lift themselves out of poverty, to fulfil their potential and to flourish.

As part of the Caritas International network, we work through the Catholic church and other local partners in Africa, Latin America, Asia and the Middle East to fight poverty and injustice. We are so grateful for your support and commitment to our work, without which, none of this would be possible.

#### **Responding to emergencies: Refugee Crisis**

**Around the world, more than 65 million people have been forced to flee their homes – the same as the population of the UK.**

The United Nations Refugee Agency says that while many displaced people seek safety within their own country, most refugees flee to neighbouring countries.

These countries are some of the poorest in the world, and the influx of people places a huge burden on communities that are already struggling.

Our aid workers met two Syrian grandmothers, Watfa and Sahara, in a temporary camp in Lebanon. *“We were trapped by aeroplanes, they were bombing us,”* Watfa said. *“They were bombing our children. When we ran through the streets, we could see people dying.”*



The friends escaped bombing and attacks by hitchhiking part of the way to the Syrian mountains. Then they walked for three days in the snow wearing the slippers they escaped in. Twelve days later, with very little food to eat, they finally arrived in Lebanon, a country that has opened its doors to so many of our sisters and brothers. One in every four people in Lebanon is a refugee.

Working through local staff at Caritas Lebanon, CAFOD is helping these forgotten people – some of the most vulnerable in the world – on the next stages of their journey. We have been working in Lebanon since the 1970s and our long history there means we are a trusted organisation in the country.

Thanks to your generosity, we are supporting people to settle in their new country. People are helped with French lessons (the main school language) so they can make new friends and integrate.

Many adults and young people arrive in the country with degrees or professional qualifications, but they will not be considered for jobs.

We are helping to train them in professions like hairdressing or photography, so they can earn some money with vocational skills.



*Syrian refugee children taking part in drawing activities at a child-friendly space.*

When people have fled violence or war, they often need medical help for injuries or long-term conditions, or to cope with emotional trauma. Children especially struggle to live normal lives – trying to come to terms with living in a new place having lost their best friends, or their parents. Our experts are supporting them with puppets, drawing and play sessions to come to terms with the horror they have witnessed.

## Access to justice in Zambia

**With your support, we are championing women's and children's rights in Zambia's Copperbelt Province by providing free legal advice, legal representation, mediation and counselling.**

According to Zambian law, every person has the right to access justice.

However, in the Copperbelt Province the court processes are extremely complex, expensive and often disregard the needs of the poor and vulnerable. Women are generally regarded as subordinate to their male counterparts, have less voice, less autonomy, fewer opportunities and lowered self-esteem.

High levels of illiteracy in the area, particularly amongst women, can prevent people seeking justice from fully

understanding court procedures, putting them at a disadvantage. In the rural areas of the Copperbelt, the only recourse for most women and children is customary law, which tends to perpetuate the abuse of children and young girls.



*Ndola diocese paralegal advisors providing community members with information on how to prevent and report*

In this challenging context, our partner the Catholic Diocese of Ndola is directly reaching 10,000 vulnerable women and children with legal support, providing field staff to ensure that legal advice is accessible for those who need it most. Our partner runs sessions on reporting abuses to empower those most at risk of abuse at home and in their communities. The programme also promotes human rights and advocacy through running training courses for police, teachers and local authorities and raising awareness in the community through mobile legal clinics, newsletters and legal materials.

**Ranked 181 out of 188 countries evaluated in the 2016 Human Development Index, Mozambique remains one of the poorest countries in the world. Over two thirds of the population live below the poverty line and half the population lives on less than a dollar a day.**

Tete Province in Mozambique has seen the development of extractives (coal, gold and diamonds) and the installation of commercial agriculture schemes. Yet it remains one of the poorest provinces in the country.

Farmers in Tete face many challenges that prevent them from growing enough to eat and sell, including a lack of irrigation infrastructure and drought-resistant seeds, the prevalence of crop-destroying pests, poor rainfall and a lack of knowledge about how to successfully store crops and care for livestock. Communities receive little guidance on health, citizenship and human rights, managing conflict or the environment.

In this challenging context, our local partner Sociedade Salesiana em Moçambique (SSM) is working with eight rural communities, providing training for farmers in the latest innovations in agriculture and animal husbandry to improve access to food and increase family income.

The farmers have formed small support groups and are sharing skills across their communities.

Our partner is providing tools and seeds for farmers, as well as guidance on forming savings and lendings groups, which will enable the farming families to become economically secure.



Making mineral blocks for livestock

This work is helping vulnerable households to overcome hunger and is encouraging economic growth throughout the area. Ensuring that young people can earn a secure living is a key focus of SSM.

Suzana Mateus has been a member of 'Chuma Chirithaka' farmers' group since the beginning of the project. She says:

*"I have participated in various training sessions, such as how to create savings groups, conservation agriculture and on food processing.*

*I had not planted vegetables in my field before this project, but after training I am proud to say that I have been able to grow healthy vegetables in my area. In the food processing training, I learned to prepare and preserve tomato sauce - this is really useful because here none of us has a refrigerator.*



Suzana Mateus with her crops

*I have four children and five grandchildren. Thanks to this project, our living standards have improved and we eat better than before. I can now buy good quality fish to feed my family. My nephew is studying and I can buy him a uniform and school supplies. I feel rewarded."*



## A landmark victory for the Mauá community: eviction halted

**In late 2017, over 4,000 of you signed petitions, sent emails and shared photos on social media, calling for a halt to the eviction of almost a thousand people in the Mauá community in São Paulo, Brazil.**

For years, the community had been negotiating to buy the building where they live for social housing on an affordable rent. However, an eviction date was set for 22 November 2017. The community decided to raise a petition to demonstrate public support for their claim to housing, and asked CAFOD to do the same.

Your actions boosted a successful international campaign and we are delighted to report that the eviction did not take place. Furthermore, an agreement has been reached for the purchase of the building for conversion to social housing.

The agreement has yet to be formalised legally, and there is no guarantee that all the families who live in Mauá will be prioritised for social housing in the building once it has been converted, but for now the community has somewhere to call home.



*Neti, Mauá Community Leader*

Neti is the community coordinator for our partner in Mauá. She says:

*"I want to thank each and every one of you for your support. After so much struggle and sacrifice, 10 years of ups and downs, it is finally feasible; we have persuaded the owners of the need for families to live here. The struggle will continue! Thank you!"*

Thanks to the Conference of Religious and other CAFOD supporters, as well as over 6,000 volunteers we are better able to stand with our brothers and sisters across the world and help them to build more secure lives for themselves and their children. This report details just a selection of the work made possible by your support during the past year

**Here is how we have lived our values:**

### **Compassion**

**In Ethiopia the CAFOD, SCIAF and Trocaire collaboration continued and CAFOD raised over £1 million from supporters to address the effects of the El Niño Crisis.**

### **Dignity**

In White Nile State in South Sudan, water supply systems were upgraded and all installations (priming pumps and pipelines) completed, serving 18,000 people. In addition, 1,210 latrines in 6 refugee villages have been rehabilitated, serving over 24,000 people, with hygiene and weekly camp cleans carried out, reaching 29,778 people.

### **Partnership**

**The number of volunteers that give their time to CAFOD has grown to over 5,770.**

### **Stewardship**

Most recent research amongst Mass-going Catholics showed that 91 per cent of CAFOD supporters trust us a 'great deal' or 'quite a lot'.

## **Hope**

**CAFOD's office in Managua has joined forces with sister agencies, Trocaire, Caritas Suisse and CRS to support the Bishops of Nicaragua in their efforts to spread the messages of Laudato Si' within the national community and in a context of extreme vulnerability to climate variation.**

## **Sustainability**

CAFOD has been supporting partners in five countries to engage in advocacy on SDG implementation, including two church partners at both national and local level (Caritas agencies in DRC and Sierra Leone as well as partners in Zimbabwe, Bolivia and Bangladesh).

## **Solidarity**

**35,304 messages of hope for refugees were received in response to our Lampedusa Cross action. Trustees' Report for the year ended 31 March 2017**

***Do you know someone who might be interested to hear about CAFOD?  
Please do pass on this report to them and share the work  
that you have made happen***

## TRAC report of COR



### TRAC report of COR AGM 2018

TRAC (, **R**aising **A**wareness and **C**ampaigning) is a network of approximately 16 different Religious Congregations of women and men who meet every six to eight weeks in Chigwell Convent. Since 2005 TRAC has been campaigning to end the evil of human trafficking in the UK.

We believe that ending the **demand** for sexual services will end the supply of, mainly women and girls to the sex industry. In one of our campaigns “Demand is the key” we highlighted the fact that without the demand there would be no supply. Our present campaign is seeking to make as many people as possible aware of the law known as the “Nordic Model” which is a law began in Sweden 20 years ago which decriminalises the women and girls caught in the sex trade and criminalises the buyers of sex and to lobby parliament to pass such a law in the UK. I

This law is now implemented in Sweden, Iceland, Ireland, Northern Ireland, France etc and is also the model which has the support of Pope Francis.

At the time of writing the #MeToo and #TimesUp campaigns are receiving vast coverage in the media. This , we believe, could be the tipping point for campaigns like ours. They highlight the abuse of women which has been going on in most major institutions, Entertainment, Aid Agencies, Churches, and many others for years and by extension they highlight the abuse of women in prostitution. If it is not okay in Haiti then it is not okay in the UK.

Last year we commissioned Tenten theatre Group to produce a play for schools and parish groups. The play called “Grace” has now been shown in several schools. It tells the story of Grace, who is groomed by her older boyfriend to work as a prostitute. The play is very moving and powerful as it highlights to young people today how easy it is to be betrayed by someone you trust.

In Europe Renate (**R**eligious in **E**urope **N**etworking **A**gainst **T**rafficking and **E**xploitation) continue to also highlight the sin of sexual slavery and forced labour.

Trafficking in human beings will always be fuelled by the demand for sexual services. TRAC believes that the sex trade can and must be abolished and we seek to end the culture of normalising pimping, sex buying and brothel owning. We will be inviting as many people as possible to raise awareness of this evil in our society and intend to network with all those in the media and parliament who can influence the law and make a change so that sexual abuse is no longer tolerated in our society.

**Sr. Marie Power HFB**

## REPORT TO COR 2017- HOUSING JUSTICE REPORT

### THE NATIONAL VOICE OF CHRISTIAN ACTION ON HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING NEED



#### Chair Welcome – Bishop James

The year covered by this annual report, Spring 2016 to Spring 2017, will be one that lives long in the memory, notable for its political shocks, surprises, and turbulence in global affairs. At the root of much of this turbulence has been identity, who we are and where we belong, where we call home and what home looks like. At the same time housing and homelessness themselves have been key parts of national debate.

This is the context for this annual review: homelessness in all its forms, at ten year highs and increasing year on year. This report details the extraordinary work Housing Justice does to mitigate this rise and tackle the root causes of homelessness, partnering with churches, community groups and people of other faiths or no faith at all in the last twelve months.

There is much to be proud of; 7 new Church and Community night shelters have been delivered, including a ground breaking multi-faith initiative in the Midlands. This year, 12 Church and Community Night Shelters have received the Housing Justice Quality Mark to an excellent standard with an overall total of 29 projects having been through the process in the last three years.

Meanwhile, the Housing Justice Hosting project has provided hospitality and hope to more than 40 destitute migrants, offering safety and security with a host paired by Housing Justice. More than £22,000 was paid out in destitution funds during this period, to ensure that guests have subsistence money.

Our Faith in Affordable Housing project has worked with churches sitting on underused land, providing 40 homes at sub-market rents within the last year. In the political arena there has been progress too, as Housing Justice was involved in the work to produce the Homeless Reduction Act, which gained Royal Assent in the spring of 2017 and will ensure a greater focus on prevention in the years to come.

But despite these projects, and the real difference they have made, there remains much to do to meet the challenge of Britain's homelessness crisis. Part of that will be to deliver more bed spaces, more bricks and mortar and to do so in a safe way. Homelessness is all of our problem; it diminishes each of us, and so each of us must be part of the solution





### Chief Executive - Kathy Mohan

Alison Gelder retired in March 2017 and I am privileged to have succeeded her as CEO. I have come to Housing Justice at a time when we are needed more than ever. The housing market has changed significantly over recent years and we are seeing more people struggling to find good homes. Rough sleeping increased by 134% in the decade leading up to 2016. Households living in temporary accommodation has risen 55% in the same decade, indicating the growth in numbers of people presenting to councils who, as homeless, they have a legal duty to house. Of the 20% of all households living in the private rented sector, very few have security of tenure. This is a larger proportion of households than those renting from council or housing associations, which make up 17% of households. All ages are represented in this growing private rented sector – 11% are over 65 and we have seen a 300% increase in flat sharers aged between 45 and 54. Church communities are attempting to respond to housing challenges locally, and Housing Justice is in a unique position to articulate concerns across Christian denominations and to facilitate local action to address immediate needs.



***Church communities are attempting to respond to housing challenges locally, and Housing Justice is in a unique position to articulate concerns across Christian denominations and to facilitate local action to address immediate needs.***

To read the full report, please use the following link:

<https://www.housingjustice.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=a1f6d59a-0566-4401-b144-f5d20ab50c5b>

## **Conference of Leaders of Anglican Religious Communities (CLARC) 2017-2018**

As in recent years the Conference met at the Retreat House of The Community of the Resurrection in Mirfield, for two and a half days in October 2017. The 21 Leaders present joined the Community of the Resurrection in their Chapel for worship, and in their Refectory for meals.

In addition to catching up with news, and topical matters of mutual concern the programme focussed on Leadership. The Rev'd Canon Professor Loveday Alexander led the Conference in Bible Study on the approach to Leadership found in 1 Thessalonians, and Sister Josephine Mary Miller of the Bernadine Cistercians at Hying, reflected with the members on various aspects of Leadership. They were a very effective team. There was also input from Dominic Curran, Senior Associate from solicitors Anthony Collins, who spoke about current issues facing religious communities and charities, and answered questions. During the conference some attended a book launch in the College of "Oneness: The Dynamics of Monasticism" edited by Stephen Platten published by SCM Press. This contains chapters by Bishop Stephen Platten, George Guiver CR, Nicholas Alan SSF, Dr Peta Dunstan and others.

Following the publication of the 2018-19 edition of the Anglican Religious Life Yearbook last autumn it has been decided that future editions will be on line only, as that is how most people now access information, and the printed yearbook has become disproportionately expensive, due to falling demand.

The Revision of "A Handbook of the Religious Life" produced by The Advisory Council on the Relations of Bishops and Religious Communities, and last revised in 2004, has been further delayed because of on-going changes in Safeguarding regulation, and proposed changes in the Advisory Council itself. The Advisory Council is, very broadly, comparable with The Mixed Commission.

As from July 2018 the number of Bishops on the Council will increase to 6:- 3 Diocesan Bishops and 3 Suffragans. The Council continues to be chaired by Bishop David Walker, who is a Franciscan Tertiary. The episcopal members of the Council will constitute a committee of the House of Bishops, and will have some delegated authority from that body. This will enable the Council to obtain legal advice more easily, and will clarify the position of the Advisory Council in relation to the House of Bishops. There continue to be 10 Religious as elected members – 7 women and 3 men, as well as the Secretary Fr Colin CSWG, and now 4 co-opted members, including 3 who are members of various "new monastic" communities and Dr Peta Dunstan, a historian with particular expertise in Anglican Religious Life. A draft Canon will come to the Church of England's General Synod in July, and if approved, will then continue its journey through the synodical process. If passed this would give canonical recognition of religious communities for the first time since their revival in the nineteenth century, and will enable a more satisfactory system of licences for ordained members of Communities.

The Secretary of the Advisory Council represents the Council and Religious Communities on the Steering Group that is co-ordinating the response of the Church of England for IICSA, the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, whose work is of course on-going.

In July the Advisory Council will receive the report of its working party on the use of traditional terminology in various types of Religious Community – an issue which has been causing concern to some members of historic, newer and emerging communities, and some confusion in the wider church

Following the circulation of CLARC's Report on Episcopal Visitations, a day conference for Episcopal Visitors was held at Lambeth Palace in February, and was found to be very valuable by those who attended.

In July 2017 Anglican Religious Communities (ARC) held a second conference to bring members of historic and newer communities together. This was hosted by the Lee Abbey Community in North Devon and attended by over 100 people, about half of whom were Religious in historic communities. The others were members of newer or emerging communities, or those exploring possibilities. The theme was "God, each other and the world: Deepening our Understanding of Community Life" and the organising committee was drawn from both historic and newer communities. Those who attended found it a very valuable opportunity to build on the experience of the first such conference held in

2015, and another event is being planned for 2019. ARC is exploring ways of including those newer communities that wish to be involved more fully in its on-going work.

There has been a marked improvement in awareness of the possibility of vocations to Religious Life, and in co-operation in vocations work between Religious Communities and the Church of England at national level, though this awareness is still very variable at diocesan level! A key event was a national conference of diocesan vocations staff at which a small team of Religious acted as Chaplains and several newer Religious gave a presentation about their vocations. Their presence and contributions made a real impression on diocesan vocations personnel who are at present very focussed on targets for vocations to priesthood! Religious are now to be involved at the invitation of the Division of Ministries in an on-line enquirers' group for people at the very initial stages of enquiring, in face to face meetings with enquirers, spiritual directors or vocations advisors needing guidance about Religious Life, and in presentations at Vocations events. Obviously some of this was happening previously but it rather depended on individual contacts. Naturally personal contacts will continue to play an important role, but the hope is that in future people may be able to access information and guidance on Religious Life more easily, whatever their starting point.

The Archbishop of Canterbury's declared priority of Prayer and Religious Life obviously continues to help in focussing the church's attention in these areas. A number of dioceses are pioneering schemes broadly similar to the St Anselm Community at Lambeth Palace, giving younger adults the opportunity to experience something of the rhythms of prayer, community life and ministry in a form of apostolic religious life for a year, as part of their Christian formation. Naturally these projects will be different in various ways, not least because they will be away from the glare of publicity which goes with the territory at Lambeth Palace!

Sister Sue Berry CSF (Anglican Rep. on the COREW Executive)

## **THE ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH CONTEMPLATIVES ANNUAL REPORT May 2017 ~ May 2018**

This year has been dedicated to preparing for our General Assembly to be held in Hinsley Hall, 21 ~ 24 May 2018. The Executive Committee had decided to use this Assembly to share with all our communities some of the insights reflected upon throughout the International Meeting organised by the Dicastery in Vatican City to celebrate the conclusion of the year dedicated to Consecrated Life, 28th Jan ~ 2nd Feb 2016.

The three members of our Executive Committee who attended this unique and inspiring event highly recommended the main speaker, Sr Fernanda Barbiero SMSD, an Italian Dorothean sister, with wide experience of religious life. We have been fortunate in being able to engage her ( and a translator ! ) to share with us in Hinsley Hall something of the inspiring and practical wisdom she presented at the International Meeting in Rome in 2016.

Archbishop Longley plans to be with us as much as possible : he is the member of the Hierarchy responsible for the care of our Contemplative Communities.

Throughout the year we have awaited the new " Instruction " referred to at the conclusion of " Vultum Dei Quaerere "

Elections for a Chairwoman and a Deputy Chairwoman will be held at the end of our meeting. I am retiring at this Assembly.

I hope that these few lines give you a taste of the year.

All good wishes

Sincerely yours

S Joanna Jamieson OSB

Deputy Chairwoman - Association of British Contemplatives



## **THE ASSOCIATION OF MISSIONARIES AND RELIGIOUS OF IRELAND (AMRI)**

The Association of Missionaries and Religious of Ireland (AMRI) is an amalgamation of two of the largest existing religious membership organisations, the Conference of Religious of Ireland (CORI) and the Irish Missionary Union (IMU), in a response to a desire to energise and support the life and ministry of the Church, both in Ireland and overseas.

CORI was first established under the title Conference of Major Religious Superiors of Ireland (CMRS) in November 1960 and has a combined membership of approximately 9,000 from 138 religious congregations. The IMU was set up in 1970 for the broad purpose of providing a collaborative network of missionary groups, with 1,500 Irish Missionaries from over 80 member congregations currently engaged in 84 developing countries.

The purpose of AMRI will be to represent and promote active collaboration between Religious Institutes, Societies of Apostolic Life and Missionary Organisations. Key strategic programme areas include Mission & Education at home and abroad; Justice, Peace and Environment; Health and Pastoral Care; and Support to its Membership

AMRI is based in Cypress Grove, Templeogue, Dublin 6W, the Provincialate of the Missionaries of Africa (White Fathers).

**To keep up to date with AMRI activities please visit their website: <https://www.amri.ie>**

## **THE ASSOCIATION OF SENIOR RELIGIOUS 2016 – 2017**

The Association of Senior Religious is open to all religious, men and women, over the age of 60 years. There is an annual Conference held in Bournemouth each year the week before Holy Week. This is well attended and there is much laughter to be heard as well as some serious discussions. The speakers are all excellent. Next year the Conference is on April 8th to 11th 2019 inclusive and the speaker is to be Sister Gemma Simmonds CJ

Membership of the ASR includes access to a number of events organised by the London Branch of the ASR. Membership includes 2 separate days of retreat held in the Little Sisters of the Poor's house in Vauxhall together with other social events. There are two newsletters which are distributed in the Summer and Winter and is the main method of communication and support for the members. The role of the National Executive is to arrange the annual Conference whilst the London branch arranges the social activities.

The National Executive comprises President: Sister Sheila Sumner OSM; Deputy President: Sister Ann Heaney SP together with Sisters Imelda Fleming HC, Sue Haddock RSM, Anne Hogan SCI and Treasa Ridge PBVM



## **UNION OF THE EUROPEAN CONFERENCES OF MAJOR SUPERIORS**

**UCESM**, a Church association of Canonical Right and also an International Non-Profit-Making Association of Belgian Right (AISBL), is a union at the service of Religious Life in Europe. For the time being (April 2017), UCESM gathers 39 national Conferences of 28 European countries for a total of about 230.000 religious

### **ACTIVITIES IN 2017**

#### **Meetings at which members of the Committee / members of the General Secretary took part**

The Executive Committee of UCESM met three times in 2017: on 6-9 March in Budapest, on 3-5 July in Moscow and on 23-26 November in Luxembourg.

Their work focused mainly on the reflection on and preparation of the 18th General Assembly of UCESM in Romania in March 2018 with the topic: "Widen the space of your tent" (Is 54:2) within the overall framework of "immigration and integration". But the members also took the opportunity of visiting some highlights of the place of the venue and of meeting members of the local Conference(s) or Church leaders.

On 4 May 2017, the President, Fr. Giovanni Peragine, and the Secretary General, Sr. Marjolein Bruinen, of UCESM took part in a study day organized by the UISG in Rome (I) on the internationality of religious sisters in the United States.

Sr. Marjolein also attended (on 3-8 May) the study days organized by RENATE (Religious in Europe networking against Trafficking and Exploitation) and Andante (European Alliance of Catholic of Women's Organizations) on modern slavery in Durres (Albania).

All over the year 2017, Sr. Marjolein travelled around a lot to visit various national Conferences (KNR in the Netherlands, URV in Belgium, DOK in Germany, CORSUM in Russia, VFÖ and SKÖ in Austria, LKDIPAK in Latvia...) or to attend their AGM.

On 6-8 September, Nicole from the UCESM-headquarters in Brussels represented the Union at the 21st International Congress of RENOVABIS (the Solidarity action of the German Catholics with Eastern Europe) in Munich.

On 7 September 2017, Sr. Marjolein attended in Lushnjë (Albania) the episcopal consecration of the UCESM-President, Fr. Giovanni Peragine, as an Apostolic Administrator in Southern-Albania.

On 4 November, she was present at a meeting organised by the Bishop of Berlin Rainer Koch to discuss the idea of setting up a European University for religious in Berlin.

Early December, she took part in the meeting of the Forum of Catholic Inspired NGO's in Rome.

## 1. Introduction

### a. Message from Dr Phil McCarthy, Chief Executive Officer

Caritas Social Action Network has a clear purpose: to help develop Catholic social action as part of the mission of the Church in England & Wales. We want our nations to be places where every person can flourish in their families and communities, living with peace and dignity.

We are a small national team, based in London alongside our sister Caritas agency CAFOD, seeking to strengthen and build solidarity among our member charities, and to bring the voices of the poor and of Catholic social teaching to bear in guiding public policy. We aim to develop capacity for voluntary and community action, in partnership with the dioceses in England and Wales, and through our network of independent member organisations committed to the principles of Catholic social teaching.

I hope this Annual Review will provide you with a good overview of our work. The structure of the Review follows our charitable objects, which define our activities, accompanied by reflections from Pope Francis. The charity's objects are to:

- Further the charitable works of the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales in accordance with its teaching through the development of the network of those working in social action;
- Advance the education, training, practice and formation of those active in the field of Catholic social action;
- Promote the development of individuals and communities for the benefit of the poor, the vulnerable and the marginalised of all faiths or none by offering a coherent Catholic voice in the public arena, and
- Operate for the public benefit in the delivery of all its charitable objectives.

### b. The Caritas Social Action Network national team

During 2017 there were some changes to the team as members moved on to new challenges. We are grateful to the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales for seconding an intern to our team.

- Phil McCarthy: Chief Executive Officer
- Clive Chapman: Senior Policy & Projects Officer
- Isabella George: Office Manager
- Faith Anderson: Public Affairs Officer
- Porsha Nunes-Brown: Network & Communication Officer (to July 2017)
- Chris Knowles: Temporary Network & Communication Officer

(from August to December 2017)

- Elize Sakamoto: Administrator (from November 2017)
- Katie Milne: Intern (to June 2017)
- Anna Geatrell: Intern (from September 2017)
- Sean Ryan: National Caritas Community Sponsorship Coordinator

(in partnership with Caritas Salford)

## 2. Developing the network

"Fraternal relations between people, and cooperation in building a more just society – these are not an idealistic dream, but the fruit of a concerted effort on the part of all, in service of the common good. I encourage you in this commitment to the common good, a commitment which demands of everyone wisdom, prudence and generosity."

Pope Francis 27/7/13



Caritas Social Action Network encourages fellowship and collaboration between our family of Catholic social action organisations, developing the Network of those working in social action and as a way of serving the common good. This cannot just be the work of the national office team, but of everyone working in our member charities. During 2017 there was much concerted effort, as well as the virtues mentioned by Pope Francis, and there was much fruitful work.

#### **a. The Network in 2017**

Our family of over forty charities continue to grow. In 2017 we were pleased to welcome five new members:

- Caritas Diocese of Leeds was launched in 2017 and is an umbrella organisation for social action charities, agencies, projects, services and groups within the Diocese of Leeds.
  - Caritas Jersey was launched in September 2013 and puts Catholic Social Teaching into practice in Jersey. Initial activities include: establishing and promoting a Catholic Think Tank on social issues in Jersey, promoting with government a Commission on social justice, providing support to vulnerable families, and encouraging young people to engage in the democratic system.
  - The Medaille Trust operates nine houses and a families' centre serving men, women and dependent children who have been trafficked. The Trust delivers education and awareness training to schools, community groups and interested parties. This is supported by a network of representatives linked to Catholic Dioceses.
  - Noah Enterprises seeks to help the most disadvantaged in the local community of Luton. Particularly, it is concerned with providing a practical, empowering and caring service to people who are homeless particularly those who are temporary or entrenched rough sleepers, and those who are marginalised and socially excluded, or have simply fallen into poverty.
  - St Joseph's Hospice opened in 1905 and since then has been caring for people affected by serious illness living in North and East London. The Hospice aims to improve the quality of life for people with life-limiting conditions and help them live life to the full, to the very end.
- Every day people in our member charities serve the common good, cooperating to build a more just society. Their work includes community and specialist support for families and children, the elderly, the homeless, refugees, the disabled, and prisoners. Their approach is often distinctive in supporting people who cannot access help elsewhere, in building on the dignity and strengths of each person and being able to work over the long-term. They draw on deep and long-term connections of volunteers and staff with their local communities.

#### **b. The First World Day of the Poor**

In June 2016, at the end of the Year of Mercy, Pope Francis announced the creation of the World Day of the Poor, to be held annually on the 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time. In 2017 this fell on Sunday 18th November.

"This new World Day, therefore, should become a powerful appeal to our consciences as believers, allowing us to grow in the conviction that sharing with the poor enables us to understand the deepest truth of the Gospel. The poor are not a problem: they are a resource from which to draw as we strive to accept and practise in our lives the essence of the Gospel."

Together with our members, the National Justice & Peace Network, the Society of St Vincent de Paul (SVP) and CAFOD, we prepared resources for the day which included audio-visual clips of stories of those in poverty, liturgical resources including homily notes, suggestions for bidding prayers, a prayer card and a "call to action" card which encouraged people to respond to the Pope's intention.

In many dioceses, there was a strong emphasis on volunteering. Caritas Salford, Portsmouth and Middlesbrough all held events encouraging volunteering and experience-sharing. In the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton, young people aged 11 to 15 reflected on how poverty is at the heart of the Gospel at a special event in Arundel Cathedral, which included Mass and a performance by Rise Theatre. 'Awareness-raising workshops' were held in the Archdiocese of Cardiff, encouraging people to listen to those who have been on the margins of society. In Westminster a six-week programme entitled 'Say it with your life' explored how to bring Catholic Social Teaching to life in practical ways.

### **c. Community Sponsorship of Refugees**

In November 2016, the first Syrian family to be resettled by a community group under the Government's Community Sponsorship scheme arrived in St Monica's parish, Flixton, Diocese of Salford. Since then, Sean Ryan, the project lead from St Monica's, has been appointed full-time national coordinator of the scheme for Catholic parishes. By the end of 2017 there were 35 parishes moving forward with applications to welcome, befriend and support a Syrian family from a refugee camp. The parishes will take the family to the doctors, the JobCentre, find the children school places and eventually support the parents into work. According to Sean, resettling the family was "a heart-meltingly wonderful journey of sheer joy, transforming the lives of people who have had theirs destroyed, whilst transforming your own life, to a soundtrack of jokes, laughter, and songs". If your parish would consider getting involved, please visit <https://www.csan.org.uk/community-sponsorship/> for more information.

### **d. Caritas diocesan journey**

The first Caritas diocese was established in Germany in 1897. In 2012, Pope Benedict urged bishops around the world;

"to establish in the Church entrusted to his care an Office to direct and coordinate the service of charity in his name. The Bishop is to encourage in every parish of his territory the creation of a local Caritas service or a similar body, which will also promote in the whole community educational activities aimed at fostering a spirit of sharing and authentic charity."

In response to Pope Benedict's call the Bishops of England & Wales issued the following statement at their November 2013 plenary meeting:

"Inspired by the love of Christ, we reaffirm our commitment to find ways appropriate to local situations whereby dioceses can give greater support and coherence to Catholic social action through the establishment of diocesan 'Caritas' networks or structures."

Where Caritas agencies have been established the benefits are apparent. These include better integration of programmes and initiatives, mutual support for those involved and the more active involvement of parishes, schools and communities. However, the most important benefit is the increased support to those in need. Caritas agencies work with existing organisations such as Justice and Peace Networks, the SVP and others to achieve this.

2017 saw the launch of the 7th and 8th Caritas Dioceses in Shrewsbury and Leeds. Caritas Diocese of Hallam will launch in March 2018, and work towards establishing Caritas agencies is actively under way in a further five dioceses.

### **e. Embrace project**

The Embrace Project is a collaboration between Caritas Social Action Network and four charities in the Network, to test low-cost, high impact, community-led approaches that offer older people more social connections and increase volunteering, particularly in Catholic parishes. Caritas Social Action Network is the accountable body for the grant and has commissioned a national evaluation of the inter-organisational collaboration, due to report in late 2019. In 2017, the first seven local parish-based groups commenced.

### **f. Caritas Europa**

Caritas Social Action Network and our sister agency CAFOD are members of the global Caritas family, Caritas Internationalis, a confederation of over 160 members who are working at the grassroots in almost every country of the world. We are also a member of Caritas Europa which works to strengthen the Caritas network throughout Europe. Our CEO, Phil McCarthy, is a member of the Caritas Europa Executive Board.

### **g. Working with the Bishops' Conference**

As an agency of the Church, we participate in the Christian Responsibility and Citizenship Department of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England & Wales. This allows us to contribute to the wider mission of the Church and to collaborate with the Conference departments and officers.

Our CEO, Phil McCarthy, also represented the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales on the Social Affairs Commission of COMECE, the Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Community. The Commission monitors and prepares statements, contributions and activities on European Union social policy.



### **3. Advancing education, training, practice and formation of those active in the field of Catholic social action**

“Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross is nothing else than the culmination of the way he lived his entire life. Moved by his example, we want to enter fully into the fabric of society, sharing the lives of all, listening to their concerns, helping them materially and spiritually in their needs, rejoicing with those who rejoice, weeping with those who weep; arm in arm with others, we are committed to building a new world.”

Pope Francis 11/24/13

If our lives are to be truly committed to building a more just world we need to prioritise education, training, practice and formation (cf. *Gaudium et spes*, §43). Social action is an integral part of the Church’s mission, but without integrated development of lay leadership and expertise, there is a high risk that Catholic charities would wither or drift towards becoming more like instruments of the state. A sustained process for volunteer, staff and trustee formation and leadership development is required. This will be a major focus for Caritas Social Action Network over the next few years.

#### **a. Caritas Social Action Network Conference**

At the end of September, representatives of dioceses and charities came together for our Conference, ‘Mission in an Age of Austerity’. We are grateful to CCLA for hosting the conference, and to Bates Wells Braithwaite who sponsored the event and contributed to workshops.

With this conference we wanted to explore how we move forward with faith, drawing on Catholic social thought and other Christian perspectives; how our work can form and inspire the next generation of parish volunteers and charity professionals; and how we can find new opportunities for working together.

The day was rounded off by Baroness Shirley Williams who gave an account of her life in faith and politics. She spoke of the roles of women and migrants in the Church and of the need to recognise and promote their contributions:

“I think one of the key facts in all our lives, is a recognition that all of us are children of God and we have to recognise the dignity in one another.”

Finally, she sent the Network’s representatives away with the message that they must continue what they do, in the spirit of love. She told us that as a Network, we are more than individual charities and dioceses, but also a movement committed to building the Kingdom of God here on Earth.

#### **b. Caritas forums**

We provide six forums to support our members in their work, to facilitate professional development and networking, and to address issues affecting the work of Catholic charities.

The Directors’ forum meets three times a year. Its purpose is to develop, enrich and support the network of charities and other members through networking, input into advocacy and policy, communications and events, faith foundation and strategy. Membership is limited to Directors or CEOs of Network members.

The Criminal Justice forum met twice in 2017. Its purpose is to strengthen, co-ordinate and develop the work of the Church and its related agencies in response to the needs of those working in, or affected by, the criminal justice system, and to help dioceses, parishes and individual Catholics to engage with criminal justice issues.

The Communications forum met twice in 2017. Its purpose is to build communication capacity in the Network, foster more joint working among member charities, share best practice and to facilitate training.

The Fundraising & Marketing forum met twice in 2017. Its purpose is to support staff at strategic and operational levels through providing opportunities for networking and peer support and developing the capacity of member organisations to collaborate where appropriate.

The Older People’s Services forum met three times in 2017. Its purpose is to develop the capacity of the Network’s member charities and affiliates to network, collaborate and advocate on behalf of older people and their carers in England and Wales.

The Schools Services forum met three times in 2017. Its purpose is to advocate for children’s services, to enable collaboration between agencies and with those who represent Catholic education nationally so that the shared vision based on Catholic Social Teaching is embedded in the education

and welfare of children and families. It enables networking, peer support and sharing of best practice. The forums have started to evolve during 2017. The trend is towards fewer forum meetings with time-limited task groups carrying out specific pieces of work within the area of interest of the forum. In December we held a workshop for members on the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) which may be a model for future training events.

### **c. Durham University / Caritas Social Action Network Research Project: Catholic Faith Related Charities**

Since 2015 Pat Jones has been undertaking a PhD on Catholic charitable work in relation to homelessness. Pat has worked in Catholic charities and the Church for many years. She writes:

“My PhD project is a partnership between Caritas Social Action Network and Durham University, funded by the Plater Trust. After many years working in Catholic charities and the Church – I was deputy director of CAFOD, and chief operations officer of Depaul International – it has been a privilege to do practical theological research and give a voice to the experience and insights of Catholic faith-related charities.

“The reality of being a Catholic charity – or a charity with significant Catholic roots and connections – is more complex and more interesting than official documents and assumptions often suggest. My thesis examines what it means in practice to be a Catholic charity and how we use Catholic social teaching. Six CSAN member organisations took part, through interviews and focus groups involving staff, volunteers and trustees. The charities all work in some way on homelessness, an enduring theme of Catholic social mission, but one surprisingly little discussed in Catholic social teaching.

“I’m currently in the final year of the project and hope to complete my thesis by the end of 2018. It will lay out an expanded idea of being a Catholic charity and a more reciprocal and inclusive understanding of how their work relates to Catholic social teaching. After that, I hope to share the results with any interested CSAN members, and if possible, to contribute resources that might be useful in staff development and other areas including advocacy.”

### **4. Offering a coherent Catholic voice in the public arena**

“In her dialogue with the State and with society, the Church does not have solutions for every particular issue. Together with the various sectors of society, she supports those programs which best respond to the dignity of each person and the common good. In doing this, she proposes in a clear way the fundamental values of human life and convictions which can then find expression in political activity.”

Pope Francis 24/11/13

As Christians we are called to involvement in the world, and so inevitably in politics. We do not have solutions for every issue, and we need to work with others of good will. In our advocacy work Caritas Social Action Network aims to protect and promote respect for human dignity and the common good. We promote the development of individuals and communities for the benefit of the poor, the vulnerable and the marginalised of all faiths or none, by offering a coherent Catholic voice in the public arena. In doing this we strive to be good news for the world and to achieve and maintain depth and integrity in all we do.

#### **a. Parliamentary advocacy**

In February, we submitted a response to the Department of Work and Pensions consultation on the Green Paper, ‘Work, health and disability: improving lives’. Using evidence from the Cardinal Hume Centre, Nugent, Caritas Anchor House and Caritas Westminster’s St Joseph’s Pastoral Centre, the response outlined best practice in disability employment, suggested measures for both recruiting and retaining staff with disabilities or long-term health conditions and assisting them in finding work with JobCentre Plus work coach support.

This was followed in March by a response to an inquiry by the All Party Parliamentary Group on Hunger, into Holiday Hunger. The short inquiry was called in response to widespread evidence that children who usually receive free school meals during term time can return from school holidays in a worse mental and physical condition, having gone several days without a proper meal.

Our response has focused on school holiday projects by two members, Nugent and the Cardinal Hume Centre, responding to the APPG’s call for “solutions that can be driven by local communities –

with support from the Government, businesses and charities – to ensure no child goes hungry in the holidays”. Both projects have been successful in integrating the service within their communities alongside learning, play and extra opportunities for support to parents. Our evidence featured in the eventual report, ‘Hungry Holidays’, which was published by the APPG on Hunger.

In the new parliamentary session in September, we made a submission to an Inquiry by the House of Lords Select Committee on Citizenship and Civic Engagement. The response tells of grassroots initiatives which rely on volunteering and foster a sense of commitment to wider society, and how faith communities provide both the structure and the motivation for these encounters. The submission also reports members’ feedback that the greatest barrier to active citizenship is the isolation caused by poverty.

#### **b. Parliamentary Reception**

At the end of October, members of the Network gathered at the Palace of Westminster for the annual parliamentary reception. We are grateful to CCLA for sponsoring the event. As well as the usual celebration of the work that our member charities do every day, this year’s reception focused on loneliness and isolation. Many of the members of the Network work with excluded people – prisoners, neglected children, old people living alone, and refugees far from their families.

Cardinal Nichols addressed the theme of loneliness, commenting:

“Our Christian faith is intensely realistic. Unlike any other philosophy of life, it embraces human brokenness and opens up its transformation. So we see the reality of radical loneliness, and its emptiness, entering the very soul of Jesus as he faces death on the cross. We know his words, his cry of sheer pain, of feeling abandoned. And we know, and rejoice in, the transforming power of the Holy Spirit which filled that emptiness with a new glorious communion and life. That, we believe, is the destiny for every person, allowing themselves to be embraced by God. That is the true hope by which we live.”

The Co-Chair of the Jo Cox Commission on Loneliness, Seema Kennedy MP, concluded her address as follows;

“Jo recognised that whatever our political division, however we voted in the referendum, whatever colour or creed or background we have, as humans and as children of God, we all have more in common. So, I thank all of you today, because it is really you, you are his hands, you are the ones doing this work and putting all these ideas of ours into action.”

#### **c. Caritas Internationalis “Share the Journey” campaign**

This year also saw the launch of a two year campaign by Caritas Internationalis on migration, ‘Share the Journey’, which has at its heart the vision of a united global human family. The focus is on our shared journey as people on the move around the world. The campaign promotes opportunities for migrants and settled communities to come together and share stories and experiences.

With CAFOD, we launched the Share the Journey campaign in the media and among individual campaigners on 27th September, as the Pope met Cardinal Tagle, president of Caritas Internationalis, in Rome. From 4th-8th December, together with CAFOD and the Jesuit Refugee Service we held an exhibition in the Palace of Westminster. We showcased the Catholic community’s response to the migration crisis, beginning with CAFOD’s work in Greece and Lebanon through to our work in Calais and the UK, especially the Community Sponsorship Resettlement of Refugees scheme.

#### **d. Media coverage**

CSAN continued to comment regularly on social action issues in the press and on social media in 2017.

The ‘Caritas in Action’ column in the Catholic Times continued to showcase the work of members, providing an opportunity to engage a national Catholic audience on a weekly basis. Members wrote on various topics, including: Walks of Witness (The Passage), dementia online toolkits (Welcome Me As I Am), Sea Sunday (Apostleship of the Sea), and Sleepouts (DePaul UK). These articles informed readers about their work, amplified voices from the front line of service delivery and reflected on topical events.

On social media, there was good engagement with key events and campaigns such as the Caritas

Conference, the World Day of the Poor, the Parliamentary Reception on Loneliness and the Parliamentary Exhibition on Sharing the Journey. Social media has also been used to amplify the voice of the members, through the publication and promotion of important member news, such as the release of JRS's report on homelessness amongst refugees. We hope to work with our members to raise the profile of Homelessness Sunday and Racial Justice Sunday even more in 2018.

In the press, CSAN commented on topical stories including holiday hunger, loneliness, universal credit and the June election in major Catholic news outlets. Extended features in the Christmas editions of the Catholic Universe and Catholic Times provided detailed reporting on the major milestones and achievements of the network in 2017.

## **5. Operating for the public benefit**

"For her part, the Church always works for the integral development of every person. In this sense, she reiterates that the common good should not be simply an extra, simply a conceptual scheme of inferior quality tacked onto political programs. The Church encourages those in power to be truly at the service of the common good of their peoples."

Pope Francis 16/5/13

We operate for the public benefit in all our charitable activities. We do this by developing our Network, advancing education, training, practice and formation for those involved in Catholic social action and by offering a coherent Catholic voice in the public arena on social issues. Our understanding of the public is not as individual consumers competing for resources, but rather as a community of people, cooperating so that each one can flourish, especially those who are disadvantaged.

### **a. Governance**

As well as being an agency of the Bishops' Conference Caritas Social Action Network is a registered charity and a Limited Company by guarantee without share capital. Information about our status can be found on the websites of the Charity Commission and Companies House.

Our patron is Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster. Our Chair is Bishop Terry Drainey, Bishop of Middlesbrough. We have two other bishop trustees: Rt Rev John Arnold, Bishop of Salford and Rt Rev Tom Williams, Auxiliary Bishop of Liverpool. Our Vice-Chair is Sister Lynda Dearlove RSM MBE. We have seven lay trustees drawn from our members or with relevant expertise and experience. They all contribute to our work and give their time freely from their busy schedules. Details of all our trustees can be found on our website.

During 2017 we amended the terms for membership of the Network, in line with the Motu Proprio On the Service of Charity which provides an ecclesiastical legislative framework for the charity undertaken with resources from the Catholic Church.

### **b. Internal training and development**

We provided a range of opportunities to our team for continuous professional development. During the year our Public Affairs Officer Faith Anderson completed her MSc in Catholic Social Teaching, achieving a distinction.

### **c. Finances and funding**

Over the last three years Caritas Social Action Network has supplemented the core income we receive - from the Catholic Trust for England & Wales, dioceses and our members - with income from grants and a small number of individual supporters. We are grateful to all our funders and donors, but especially recognise the support that CCLA have provided for our mission. This has included use of their premises and support for our events.

### **d. Premises**

Caritas Social Action Network is based at Romero House, in Central London, with our sister Caritas agency CAFOD. We are grateful to CAFOD for sharing their office space with us and providing estates and IT support. The co-location of our national Caritas agencies helps us to collaborate, which is increasingly important given the global nature of modern social issues. During 2017 we were joined at Romero House by the national office of the Society of St Vincent de Paul



## **UISG Report for COREW AGM for 2018**

UISG is the International Union of Superiors for women Religious. It was established in 1966, inspired by the 2nd Vatican Council, to promote deeper collaboration between female congregations of Apostolic Religious Life. The USG is a separate Union for male Religious.

Plenary meetings take place in Rome every three years with an attendance of 850-950 women leaders. The Union is divided into a number of Constellations. The UK belongs to one of two Northern European Constellations. Other countries in our English-speaking Constellation are Norway, Ireland, the Netherlands and Malta. The Constellation meets once in the three year cycle. The UK Group has a membership of approximately 25 Congregational Leaders who currently meet three times a year to discuss issues of common interest and to provide mutual support for members. Meetings are usually held in March, July and October at St Philomena's Convent, Euston Square, London.

In 2017 The UK Constellation group hosted the European C1 Constellation meeting at Hindsley Hall, Leeds. Sister Jane Bertelsen FMDM led us through a wonderful presentation on the subject of Leaders in this Evolving World: The Call, the Gift and the Challenge. The participants also enjoyed a pilgrimage to Durham Cathedral, the Centre for Catholic Studies and USHAW.

In November 2017 Sister Mary Whelan as retiring Delegate for our Constellation attended a meeting of Delegates of the UISG in Manila in the Philippines. In her opening speech Sister Carmen Summut, MSOLA President of UISG said " Building Communities, especially intercultural communities requires constant hard work. We cannot take it for granted just because we have been put together. We need time to get to know each other, to allow for the differences to become gifts and not obstacles to our unity. All this takes a heart, a mind and a will that are deeply rooted in the mystery of the compassionate God. Some reports of the meeting appeared in the UISG Bulletin received by members twice a year.

The next Plenary of the UISG will take place from 6th -10th May 2019 in Rome at the Hotel Ergife. The theme will be "Sowers of Prophetic Hope"

I would strongly recommend that all Congregational Leaders join the UISG as it gives a very positive means of support and friendship as we endeavour to fulfil the role of Superior General. We are all busy people and cannot attend all meetings but we receive the Minutes and this helps us to stay in touch. If you are interested in joining please contact me by email on [fmsj@aol.com](mailto:fmsj@aol.com) or by telephone on 07740309051.

**Maureen Murphy, fmsj**

When the Centre for Catholic Studies was established at Durham University in October 2007, it represented a unique new development on the international academic and Catholic scenes: a research, teaching, and outreach unit explicitly focussed on Catholic theology, and Catholic studies more widely, but situated in the pluralist, public academy rather than on Catholic institutional soil. From the University's perspective, this represented an opportunity to deepen and to expand the strengths of an already excellent Department of Theology and Religion by engaging more intentionally and more comprehensively with the largest of the Christian traditions. From the ecclesial perspective, it represented an opportunity to give new institutional form and expression to UK Catholic theology into the future, allied with the stability and reputation of a leading research university and during a time of very considerable cultural change and institutional demise.

Over the past ten years and as a direct result of the generous support of our partner-bodies and friends – who, together with the staff and students, form the wider CCS family – something of the institutional newness and possibility of the CCS has begun to be borne into being; starting with the permanently endowed establishment of the Bede Chair of Catholic Theology in May 2008, in partnership with the **Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle**, the **Sisters of Mercy (Oaklea)**, and the **Sisters of La Retraite (Britain and Ireland)**.

It is, then, again with enormous appreciation that we can look back, in this our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, on further significant developments and points of growth over the past twelve months, none of which would have been possible without the vision, prayers, and practical support of our partner-bodies and friends. To give just a few indicative examples: our partnership with the Sisters of La Retraite, founding co-settlers of the Bede Chair endowment, continues to flourish doubly: one the one hand, in the form of a highly successful international conference which marked the culmination of the first phase of **Prof. Karen Kilby's** collaborative research with the sisters in the area of 'Suffering, Diminishment and the Christian Life'; on the other hand, La Retraite are in the final stages of establishing a three-year Postdoctoral Research Associate in Theology and Spirituality, together with making a significant contribution to the CCS Core Endowment.

Also hugely significant this year has been the establishment of the Louis Lafosse Bi-centennial Doctoral Scholarship by the **Institute of Christian Education**. Together with the continuing generous support that we receive from the **Institute of Our Lady of Mercy**, the **Congregation of Jesus**, the **Capuchin Franciscans**, and other congregations for student bursaries, this is making a decisive contribution to making postgraduate theological formation in the Catholic tradition available to the next generation of leaders. We look forward to continuing to work with all our partner religious congregations, other partner-bodies, and individuals of vision, who will support the further growth and stabilisation of the CCS in the years to come. It is our hope that by developing partnerships such as these, we will ultimately be able to endow our scholarships and bursaries on a permanent basis.

Going forward, we are still pursuing the essential funding to underpin in perpetuity our core administrative team, which is currently funded on an *ad hoc* yearly basis. Similarly, this also brings into focus the long-term need to endow the Dean-Director's post in perpetuity, which is currently a gift of the University to the CCS. As consequence, we continue to explore strategic opportunities for active national and international partnerships that will help to secure the funding, influence, and stability essential for us to achieve our aims into the future.

We also broke new academic ground this year, building on the work of several members of the CCS throughout the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, to launch an interdisciplinary conference on 'Catholicism, Literature, and the Arts, 1850-present'. With the support of key institutional partners,

most notably the **University of Notre Dame**, and with the essential backing of Durham University, we aspire to develop this area and to establish a biennial conference on a similarly stable basis to the international conference in the History of Catholicism, organized for the third time by **Dr James Kelly**, Sweeting Research Fellow in the History of Catholicism, and co-hosted this year at the University of Notre Dame's London Global Gateway.

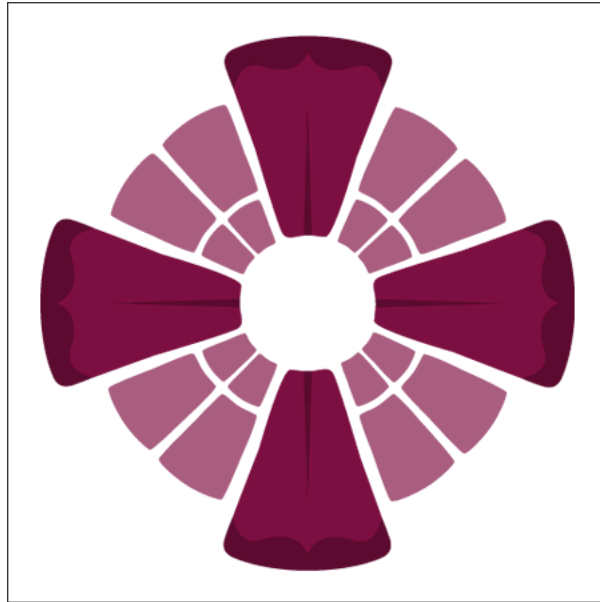
We congratulate **Dr Anna Rowlands** on her appointment as St Hilda Associate Professor of Catholic Social Thought and Practice (CSTP), an endowed post made possible by the support of many partners, including the **Society of the Sacred Heart**, and the **Congregation of the Sisters of St Joseph of Peace**. Anna is also founding Chair of the UK Centre for CSTP and as part of her new role spends 20% of her time working directly with practitioner groups, including Caritas Social Action Network, CAFOD, the Jesuit Refugee Service, and Caritas Europa. As Deputy Director of the CCS, Anna has been a key figure in our growth in recent years and combines excellence in critical-constructive research and teaching and excellence in public engagement across multiple communities in an exemplary fashion. We look forward to supporting Anna as she continues to develop this critical area of research, policy, and public engagement in the years to come.

We also welcome the **Rev. Dr Gabrielle Thomas** as Postdoctoral Research Associate, working on 'Ecclesial Learning about Women and English Churches through Receptive Ecumenism' in an exciting partnering with the **National Board of Catholic Women**. Gabby was appointed just in time to join us for the Fourth International Conference on Receptive Ecumenism, 'Leaning into the Spirit', in Canberra, Australia, in November 2017, following the first two symposia at Durham (2006, 2009), and a third in the USA (Fairfield, 2014). The conference demonstrated a diversity, energy and depth – particularly the contribution of early career scholars approaching this with fresh eyes – which suggests the emergence of a certain maturity in the understanding and application of Receptive Ecumenism, both in the academy and in the churches.

It is particularly pleasing that two of our recent postdoctoral research associates, Dr Hannah Thomas and Dr Cormac Begadon, have gone on to new appointments with friends and institutional partners, at the **Bar Convent York** and **University College Dublin**, respectively. Hannah takes on a new role as Special Collections and Research Manager and Cormac is working with Prof. John McCafferty on a research project with the Sisters of Mercy.

Looking ahead, we are particularly grateful to be working in partnership with the **Conference of Religious England and Wales** in support of our 10th Anniversary celebrations and look forward to deepening the relationship through further engagement with the Executive and wider membership. We are thankful to many others, including **Fairfield University** and **The Tablet**, for supporting the celebratory conference that will take place in April. The conference title, 'Catholic Theology in the Public Academy: Searching the Questions, Sounding the Depths', speaks to the shared mission and core aims of the CCS as a distinctive forum for the creative analysis of key issues in Catholic thought, culture, and practice, fostering talent and fomenting Catholic scholarship to inform public and ecclesial life, locally and globally.

A heartfelt thanks to each of our friends and partners – and the organisations, institutions, and groups which you represent – for all that you have made possible. We hope that news of the developments which you have enabled will bring happiness and hope. It is in this same spirit of partnership that we, in turn, hope to continue working together to ensure that our current celebration of ten years of vital beginnings can become, for future generations, a celebration of ten decades and more of flourishing in Catholic theological mission in the stable, common mainstream of the UK public academy.



**“Life is a journey. When we stop, things don't go right”.**

**Pope Francis**