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PARISH MAGAZINE

HERITAGE WALKS ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

Vision

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NEWS - VIEWS
FACT - FICTION



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DUNSTAN

988 - 1988 WOKING

FOREWORD

The Millenium of our Patron Saint seems as good a time as any to launch our Parish Magazine. The name 'VISION' suggests looking towards the future. This year modern Woking is celebrating its 150th anniversary. But the coming of the Railway was not the real beginning. Woking was first recorded in the early part of the 8th century. Evidence of stone-age inhabitants has been found all over the place. This year is just another milestone in history.

St. Dunstan's Church reminds us of our historical connection with the past by the four statues above the altar: St. Lawrence, St. Nicholas, St. Peter and St. Edward, the Patron Saints of the four pre-Reformation churches in the area covered by the Parish at the time the church was built. Unfortunately St. Dunstan's Parish Records only go back to the 1860s, when Catholic Chaplains were appointed to prisons. There was a chapel dedicated to St. Dunstan in the Woking prison, and this dedication was carried on to the temporary church erected in 1898 and to the present church which was opened in 1925. It was large enough at the time to seat all the Catholics in the town at one Mass. Since then, the parishes of West Byfleet and Knaphill have been erected. In terms of building three schools and Our Lady's Church as well as the Presbytery and Parish Hall have been built more recently.

St. Dunstan began his ministry against the history of plunder by the Danes and the inadequacy of both civil and ecclesiastical establishments over 1,000 years ago. We begin the second millenium of our Patron hoping to have put war behind us, but struggling against atheistic materialism. Our vision of the future is filled with hope, as we embark on RENEW and invite the Holy Spirit to involve us all in carrying out Christ's command to spread his Love.

At the beginning of our Millenium celebrations, a visitor to the Parish remarked: "You must be very proud of your Parish Father". The only reply I could think of was: "We haven't finished yet!"

Thank you, Neal, for the work you have put in to VISION; thank you, all who submitted articles and placed advertisements, and you, gentle reader, for buying it.

God bless you all
J Foley



First Communion

While most of our children are prepared for First Holy Communion at Saint Francis School, there are a number of children attending other schools who have to be catered for.

Sister Teresa and Miss McGeehan meet these children one day each week after school, for an enjoyable session of instruction.

The parents play their part in working with the children during the week.

When the time comes, these children will join those from Saint Francis School to make their First Communion at their regular Mass one Sunday in June.

Margaret McGeehan

Woking Life Group

The Woking Life Group has been established for some years and now has a membership of around 200.

The Group is affiliated to Life which is a national organization working to educate people about the true nature of abortion.

Assistance is given to women during and after pregnancy through the Caring Committee, who provide counselling at the office in the town, and also organize the house in Kingfield.

Support is given to national activities organized by the Central Committee, and in particular to work for the repeal of the Abortion Act 1967.

Active members are always welcome.

Margaret McGeehan

Church flowers

Every week thousands of churches of many denominations are decorated with flowers and foliage. There are, of course, certain exceptions, such as the period of Lent. A great number of people carry out this work, usually on a rotating basis, and believe you me, that there is no duty which is performed with greater pleasure.

Could it be that the quiet surroundings and the spiritual atmosphere help the arranger to be relaxed and absolved from daily worries and cares. Whatever the reason, there can be no doubt that there is a particular and very special happiness felt while church flowers are being arranged.

One of my most rewarding experiences, as a Flower Arranger has been helping with the flowers in different churches and enjoying every minute.

Would you consider joining me at St Dunstan's church arranging the flowers? It is usual to make the arrangements on a Friday or Saturday.

You do not have to be an arranger with experience, beginners who enjoy arranging flowers in their own homes will enjoy arranging church flowers just as much, and I will always be available to lend a hand if required.

On Wednesday 18th May, staging will be taking place from 10.30am until completed, of a Flower Festival for the celebration of the feast of St Dunstan on the 19th May. These occasions give much happiness to all who are involved in them. Why don't you come along and join in. You know the saying "many hands make light work".

Tina Wallis

St. Dunstan's Mother & Toddler Group

Our Mother & Toddler Group meets each Thursday morning in the Parish Hall and has done so for at least the last six years. The Group is for all parents (yes, we have had a few dads come along) and nannies with children under the age of three. We hope that everyone who comes along can relax and share their experiences and problems with others.

We are lucky to have plenty of space where we can offer the children the chance to play on larger toys which they may not be able to have at home and the toys we have are specifically for young children.

The pre-playschool children need to have a grown-up with them as although they are usually happy to play in different surroundings, they need to see a familiar face from time to time; also they are often not ready to share toys with other children or to join in organised play, and just as important each child must have someone with them who is responsible for their wellbeing and behaviour towards other children.

Over the years we have tried to have something special for the children at Christmas, not always a party if the average age of the children is very low, and in the summer months we have arranged picnics in the park or outings to Birdworld, Chessington Zoo, or Loseley Park Farm.

A few fundraising events are held over the year and the money raised is used to buy toys and equipment for the group.

New members are always welcome and we are always open to suggestions made by those who come along.

Jane Potter



BROWNIES

St. Dunstan's Brownie Pack will be 30 years old in October this year. At present we have a full and lively Pack of 24 girls, aged 7–10 years, who meet on Mondays from 4–5.30 pm – and there is a waiting list.

The aim of Brownies is to have fun whilst developing skills, encouraging new interests and learning to become reliable, useful members of the community.

Last Autumn each Brownie planted a tulip bulb in a pot and cared for it until it was about to flower. Each bulb was then given, together with a handmade greetings card, to a housebound person.

At the end of the year the whole Pack decided to work for the Jester badge and entertained their parents with music, song and dance. We join in activities with other packs in the District and with Catholic Brownie Packs in the Diocese.

Without the help of Maureen Sullivan during the past year I would not have been able to cope with the variety of needs in running a Brownie Pack. An extra pair of hands is always welcome so if anyone would like to help, either as a uniformed Guider or a Unit helper, like Maureen, please 'phone me on Woking 61087.

Roni O'Taney

Grannie

A Story by Mary Beamish

The icy, sleet laced wind whipped around Mrs Morton's legs as she closed her front door. Yesterday, the weatherman had forecast snow and it seemed to Mrs Morton, casting her eyes upwards, that he could soon be proved right. She needed to buy a few things to see her over the weekend, so she'd decided to catch the early bus into town and then she could be back before darkness fell. Mrs Morton was in her 60s and fiercely independent. She lived alone now. She and her husband had moved to this village two years ago but sadly he had died within a few months. She had come to terms with her loss and had almost made up her mind to stay and make her life here. There were not many people of her age in the village but Mrs Morton was quite happy with her own company and the letters from old friends from her past life. If she sometimes felt lonely, she would just push it to the back of her mind and bustle about, cleaning out a cupboard here, or a drawer there. She liked her life as it was and didn't want any encumbrances.

When they'd married, she and Tom had talked about having children and he'd jokingly suggested, "five or six to start with!" But that was not to be – not even one. After years of disappointment Jane Morton had accepted that fact and had a full and happy life with her husband. They had travelled to many different countries – wherever Tom's job took them. A wonderful life, for which she gave thanks. And, now that she was alone with all her memories, she didn't really need anyone or anything else.

Her elder sister had emigrated to Australia many years ago, had married and had a son. She too was dead but Mrs Morton corresponded regularly with her nephew and his wife and had visited them a few times at their lovely home in the outskirts of Melbourne.

Sitting on the bus Mrs Morton mentally checked over her shopping list. She would go to the supermarket for most of her food, but there was that little shop off the High Street which sold the most delicious homemade sweets and chocolates which Mrs Morton couldn't resist. She usually called in when she was in town. A new pair of warm gloves and some hand cream completed the list. The conductor was approaching so she put her hand in her bag to get some money for her fare and pulled out a little leather wallet in mistake for her purse. It held a picture of her husband on one side and on the other a few lines of poetry which he had written for her when they were first married. It was her most treasured possession and she carried it with her at all times. She read the precious words to herself:

My love, My life,
All this I give to you.
Your love, Your life,
Is all I want to be.

Carefully, lovingly, she closed the wallet and tucked it safely into her handbag.

The supermarket was a seething mass of people and by the time Mrs Morton reached the checkout and saw the queues of trolleys and fractious children with equally irritable mothers, she wished she'd stayed at home. The cashier scowled when Mrs Morton offered a large note for her few purchases. "Haven't you got anything smaller than that?" She slapped the change down, and Mrs Morton, flustered, dropped her handbag and shopping bag on the floor. By the time she had picked it and her shopping up, she couldn't wait to get out. "I could do with a nice cup of tea," she thought as she spotted the inviting doorway of the teashop across the road.

The tea was hot and strong and Mrs Morton was just pouring out a second cup when a young woman with a little girl and a baby sat down opposite her. Annoyed at this invasion of her peace, Mrs Morton glanced up.

The woman was surrounded by bags of shopping and looked so harassed that Mrs Morton conjured up a polite smile. The young mother let out a long sigh. "Oooph! It's like a cattle market in there. I wish they'd invent pills or something so we wouldn't have to carry all this stuff. Anyway," she continued, "I was behind you at the checkout and you dropped this."

Mrs Morton only half heard her chattering on about how she would not normally be in the teashop at this time with all the shopping, children etc. because she would normally go home to get the little ones' lunch and how erratic the buses were and so on.

What she had put into Mrs Morton's hand was the little leather wallet from her husband. To think she had almost lost it! She turned, with a grateful face, to thank the young woman and looked straight into the eyes of the little girl who was staring at

her solemnly. Mrs Morton smiled but the child did not. "Are you my Grannie?" she asked. Mrs Morton looked at the mother. "My parents were killed in a car accident before Katie was born and my husband's parents live abroad", she explained. "Katie keeps asking why can't she have a Grannie like other children and is convinced that one day she will find her." Mrs Morton smiled again at the child. "No, I am not your Grannie, Katie," she said gently. The little girl continued to stare at her and after she had bought the small family some refreshment, she offered to help the young mother to the bus stop with her shopping – only to discover that they were catching the same bus and lived not far from each other. On the bus Katie sat next to Mrs Morton and held her hand all the way home.

When she arrived home Mrs Morton picked up her mail from the mat and found a letter from

her nephew. It was full of news and he asked her to come to Australia and make her home there. It was very tempting, especially as the promised snow was falling relentlessly outside and the wind was howling around the chimney. She could swap all this foul weather for Christmas in the sun and warmth of Melbourne.

Then Mrs Morton remembered little Katie's sad eyes when she had asked, "are you my Grannie?" She nodded resolutely. She would get in touch with Katie's mother in the morning. Perhaps she could help by looking after the children while their mother did her shopping in peace, or have them to tea sometimes – a bit like a stand-in Grannie. Mrs Morton felt a warm glow. It was good to be needed. But she had discovered something else – that she needed the warmth of others too!

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Religious of St. Andrew

“**A**bout the year 1231, in the epoch of the great pilgrimages, a few women opened a hostel at Tournai, on the right bank of the River Scheldt. This first fraternity lived according to the rule of St. Augustine, received alms and offered free board and lodging to the poor who came to them for help. These were passers-by, travellers and pilgrims who, at night-fall, could find shelter in the hostel, before crossing the river and proceeding on their way into Tournai.

At the beginning of the fourteenth century, when plague, famine and wars began to decimate the population and hinder travelling, the hostel was transformed into a hospital and the care of the sick became the sisters' main work. The hospital chapel was dedicated to St. Andrew and the community soon became known by the name of the Apostle. At that time, nursing communities were allowed only a limited number of members lest (in the words of a mediaeval manuscript) 'they should devour the food of the poor.' The sisters of St. Andrew were, therefore, restricted to six but in the fifteenth century the prioress obtained a dispensation from the Bishop of Cambrai, with the result that the Community increased and devoted itself to the care of the elderly.

Towards the end of the sixteenth century, the sisters, less occupied than before by the care of the sick and prompted by a desire for a more contemplative way of life, were able to turn to that form of religious consecration so much encouraged by the Council of Trent: in 1611 the hospital became a monastery. For nearly two hundred years, that is, until the outbreak of the French Revolution in 1789, the sisters lived a cloistered life. The nuns were dispersed by the Revolutionaries and their convent seized, but the Prioress kept in touch with the sisters by means of a dress-maker's business, which she opened in the town. After the 'reign of terror' had died down, members of the community reassembled and turned their attention to the

education of girls and so the third stage of their history began. In 1857 the Community received the Constitutions of St. Ignatius from Pope Pius IX, and from that time felt 'called to live anywhere in the world where they would be able to serve God and men more fruitfully.'

These are extracts from a short history of our religious congregation, but it would take too long to describe in detail its development and peregrinations in the 20th century. We have convents now in Belgium, France, Brazil, Zaire and England. At present in this country we have a home for forty elderly ladies and a preparatory day school in Edenbridge, Kent and a small community in Woking, one of whom, Sister Teresa teaches in St. Peter's First and Middle School, Leatherhead, and two, Sister Marjorie and Sister Elisabeth work in St. Dunstan's parish.

People often say to us, why St. Andrew? He is a patron that we inherited because of the dedication of the chapel in the 14th century but the Gospel references to him, epitomise our own particular mission in the Church. On three different occasions when Andrew is mentioned in the New Testament, he is bringing people to Jesus. He began with his own brother, Peter, 'We have found the Messiah . . . and he took Simon to Jesus. John I; 41-42; when Christ multiplied the loaves and fishes, he asked whether anyone had any food and Andrew pointed out to Him the small boy with five barley loaves and two fish. John VI, 8-11; and the less-known incident of the

Greeks, who approached Philip with the request to see Jesus. 'Philip went to tell Andrew and Andrew and Philip went together to tell Jesus.' John 12; 20-22. We pray that we will continue in this tradition, going where we are needed to 'communicate the vision we have contemplated' – in the words of St. Augustine. God asks us so often to do a lot with very little in the way of human and spiritual resources – to feed 5,000 with five loaves and two fish – but it is He who works the miracle and only asks for a pair of hands and feet to be at His service. □

Sister Elisabeth

Catholic Women's League

The present section of the CWL comprises twenty members who meet on the second Wednesday of each month. At these meetings we might have a speaker of interest, a discussion on a relevant theme or anything topical to the members.

The aim of the CWL is to render help and assistance wherever needed – the Get Together Club for the over-sixties is run by members of the Section – everyone only too keen to hold fund raising events towards funds. Other events take place too numerous to mention, but we are always pleased to welcome new members.

On May 11th Gordon Tripp will speak on the work of CAFOD. Other meetings include a visit to Ash with Mass said by Father Freeman. A talk by Rosemary Fiskin – watch the newsletter.



Are you any good at guessing? How much would you guess the Parish has given to CAFOD over the last 3 years? £2,500? £6,000? £9,999?
The answer is actually over £11,000!

Just imagine for a moment the tremendous impact this has had directly on the lives of thousands of people. We have helped actual people to learn to read and write in Brazil; we can almost feel the pencil between their fingers. Actual families, just like our own, have been given seed and skills to work the land in Bangladesh; we can perhaps feel the earth as it crumbles in their hand. We have helped with the digging of wells for whole communities in Ethiopia; we can almost feel the rough handle of the pump as it fills the plastic can with water.

We are part of these communities and they see us that way.

And all this is almost without trying! How much more might have been done! Perhaps there is more we can do in support of the projects with which the Parish is currently involved.

As a Parish we are giving regularly, through the CAFOD Partnership Scheme to a range of projects in Bangladesh – the poorest country in the world. These cover help in setting up community schemes for weaving, poultry farming and vegetable growing, rural sanitation work, and a youth training programme.

All the time the aim is to help the poorest of the poor to help themselves so that they will not, for ever, be dependent on us. Within this overall giving both Bullbeggars and Our Lady, Kingfield have links with specific CAFOD projects: Bullbeggars with a scheme at Vila Prudente in Sao Paulo, Brazil and Our Lady's with a Mother and Child project in Lima, Chile. In the next issue of the Magazine we will look at

these in more detail.

But why do we work through CAFOD?

CAFOD is the official Catholic Church agency for helping the poor in the Third World and it reports directly to the Conference of the Bishops of England and Wales. At any one time there are over 500 projects which are being supported in over 70 countries. CAFOD's link into those countries is through the world-wide network of the Church. Priests and religious, local Diocesan development teams, Church youth and women's organizations approach CAFOD for support and over the years a long list of trusted partners has been built up.

Their requests are reviewed at three levels within CAFOD to make sure they meet the guidelines laid down by the Bishops. If they do the project is accepted and CAFOD hopes, and prays, that, through the CAFOD Family Fast Day, the Partnership Scheme and by private covenants and donations, the money will be made available to meet the need. It seems to work!

As Christians, however, we are called to look at the reasons behind the need to give support to so many communities. The Bible constantly focuses on the plight of the poor – we have to ask what should our response be today to the obvious misery and suffering of so many.

So CAFOD runs regular "educational" programmes. These are not just concerned with schools, though CAFOD does do an increasing amount of work in this field. The current programme concentrates on the Biblical theme of Jubilee which required

that, every 50 years, land was restored, debts cancelled and slave set free. These three issues of landlessness, debt and slavery are central to many of the problems of the Third World today and we need a clear view of what our Christian response should be.

Perhaps we can learn something about this from our Third World partners. Last year a visitor from Brazil spoke at a number of meetings in various Diocese. Writing to CAFOD afterwards he said:

"You do not limit your participation just to generous financial contributions and this, for me, was another pleasant discovery. I had a tendency in the beginning to refer to you as "benefactors" and to us as "recipients" until, at one meeting a gentle old lady pulled me up short by saying: "Excuse me! Rather you are our benefactors. You make us aware of Christian hope and fortitude even in situations of oppression. We can learn from you what Christianity is all about." Well – hardly! That was a polite exaggeration but it was through dialogue like this that I discovered what CAFOD is all about."

CAFOD, of course, is not just an organization working out of an office in Brixton. As its literature so often says, you, the reader are CAFOD and its successes are your successes. Certainly there are many in the Parish closely involved in CAFOD's work – so perhaps over the next three years we will be able to beat that £11,000 figure! □

Gordon Tripp

RENEW

We expect that by now there are not many people in the Parish that have not heard of RENEW. Some of you will have only heard a little about it, others of you are already becoming involved. Two things are very certain . . . everyone will have the opportunity to help in RENEW . . . the whole Parish will hear and experience more of RENEW as time goes on.

RENEW has prompted many reactions and comments from around the Parish. Some of these have been very positive and enthusiastic, others less so, preferring to wait and see before making a judgement. On the other hand however there have been the less favourable responses, such as "its American and gimmicky" and "we've tried it before and it didn't work". It is worth considering both of these comments in a little more detail.

Yes, RENEW does have its origins in America, in the Diocese of New Jersey. In fact in the Parish of Newark. That was ten years ago. Since then, this Parish based process has been adopted by more than seventy Diocese in America, by diocese in Canada, eight of the diocese in Australia and all of New Zealand. Renew has commenced in three of the Scottish diocese and is about to commence in El Salvador and the Diocese of Durban in South Africa. Here it has begun to embrace both black and white parishioners working together. If it was just a gimmick, it would not have such a good pedigree.

Yes there have been missions and other forms of renewal that have been introduced. But there has never been anything that has been so thoroughly researched, so carefully planned, so rooted in prayer and adopted by nearly every Parish in Arundel and Brighton Diocese before . . . RENEW is new.

Called to Serve

It is probably worth reflecting on the question why introduce anything at all. That is best answered by looking back to 1986. In preparation for the 1987 Synod on the "Role and Mission of the Laity in the Church and in the World", across the country each Parish was asked to undertake a process of consultation and submit its findings to the Diocese. A summary of these were then submitted to the Bishops Conference. This process was known as "Called to Serve". Many of you will recall being involved. The final page of the Summary Report from Arundel and Brighton contained the following statement:

"There was an overwhelming wish for ACTION. There can be no doubt that there is a heartfelt desire to see that the momentum begun in these discussions should not be lost and should be translated into a practical strategy for action"

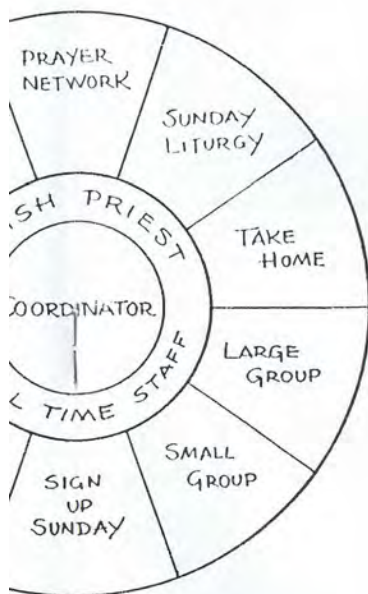
Throughout the Called to Serve consultation there was a new feeling of hope, decisiveness, action and above all urgency. Over and over again the need for spiritual renewal, re-evangelisation, to start now – seemed to be the basic hope of most people. Well one thing is for sure – this message did not fall on deaf ears. Bishop Cormac took it to his heart and has offered us RENEW as the best way that he has found to meet the needs that we identified for ourselves. He has kept his side of the bargain and it is now up to all of us to respond to the challenge that RENEW provides.

That is why? but what is RENEW? Well its purpose is to provide the





Renew



opportunity and a process by which each of us can develop a closer relationship with Christ. Through this spiritual growth we will become a more vibrant faith community which will have a more significant effect on the world around us. Since RENEW invites the whole parish, including inactive members, to participate together; since it is renewal encouraged by the parish priests and organised by parish laypeople; since all phases of RENEW are experienced in the parish, it is more than renewal of individuals. It is parish renewal and will create a spiritual climate throughout the parish community. RENEW pursues a gradual process of conversion over a two and a half year period. But before it starts there is almost a year of preparation and training of parish leaders. This is the stage we have reached at the present time. The two and a half year full parish experience begins on Sunday 2nd October this year and will be divided into five six week "seasons". The seasons will be offered in the Autumn and during Lent. Each season has its own theme which is focussed in a particular way. Renew will build on, and enhance all the many good aspects of our parish.

Involvement

All parishioners will be provided with the opportunity to join in this conversion experience in a variety of ways:

SUNDAY LITURGY when everyone present will have first hand contact with the renew theme.

TAKE HOME MATERIALS which offer an at-home experience of the same theme.

SPECIAL EVENTS which offer everyone an opportunity to share another experience of the theme.

SMALL SHARING GROUPS which can be the deepest experience of the process.

We anticipate that some of you will choose all four options whilst others will not. What we do believe is that from that menu there is something to suit everyone.

When we were first asked if we would consider co-ordinating RENEW in our Parish we had very mixed feelings. We were already convinced about the value of the process and excited at what it has to offer everyone. On the other hand we questioned if we could do it well enough. Through prayer and discernment we found we were able to say yes. Part of our YES was based on the knowledge that our parish is full of very good people with a host of talents, skill and abilities. So we knew we would not be alone. Over the coming months we will be keeping you up to date with progress and making sure you know of dates of events well in advance. Also we will be seeking help in many areas. So we ask you not to hide YOUR light under a bushel.

Most importantly we ask you all to pray for RENEW Both in our Parish and throughout the Diocese. It is prayer and the power of the Holy Spirit that will guarantee our success.

Gina and Geoff Poulter,
Parish Renew Co-ordinators.

Ecumenism in Woking

Who On Earth Are You?

Some 60 parishioners of St. Dunstan's joined other Christians in the Lent Groups this year (nearly twice as many as in 1986). It was a very worthwhile course of five meetings, each using one of the stories and parables in St. Luke's Gospel to illustrate and explore relationships with one another, at home, at work and in the world, and to grow in understanding of how our faith in God can relate to our daily life.

The *Celebration of Lent '88 for Surrey and Sussex* takes place at Ardingly on 14 May, 11.00 am – 6.00 pm. Take the family by car, take a picnic and enjoy the prayer, music and good company.

The *Local Celebration* is on 19 June at St. Dunstan's School. It

will take the form of a *Family Picnic*, with games, music and a service of prayer and readings. Bring the family and make it a real celebration of 'togetherness'. Fr. Foley has just been elected Chairman of the Woking Council of Churches so show your support for this WCC event.

Sr. Elizabeth and Eveline Marsh-Collis are our parish lay representatives on the WCC, and Eveline also represents the Woking Deanery at meetings of the Diocesan Commission for Christian Unity. At a recent meeting, Bishop Cormac, when questioned about a possible ecumenical dimension to the RENEW programme, said that we should keep our fellow Christians fully informed about it, ask for their prayers and support and invite them to participate wherever possible. He, (Bishop Cormac) believed that Seasons 3, 4 and 5 would be particularly appropriate for ecumenical involvement, and that a new impetus for Christian Unity would come about through RENEW.

The Pilgrim's Prayer

Lord God, we thank you
For calling us into the company
Of those who trust in Christ
And seek to obey his will.
May your Spirit guide and
strengthen us
In mission and service to your
world;
For we are strangers no longer
But pilgrims together on the way
To your Kingdom. Amen.



Old Mabel

She sits all alone in a high rise flat
Where the air is filled with decay.
Her memories now are all that she has
to see her through each weary long day.

A knock on the door brings fear to her heart
As slowly she lifts from her chair.
"Now who can that be? I must go and see,
For there is no one who visits around here."

She shuffled the passage-way, then gave a
cry
For who should be waiting outside,
But her daughter no less, who was looking
her best
And was standing with arms open wide.

What comfort she gave to that poor lost
soul,
For now life is better by far. For her daughter
you see,
Is staying for tea
Then will take Mabel out in her car.

Kathy Wells

Who Cares?

He's crumpled, and tatty, and in need of a
shave
For his beard is growing quite long,
His eyes have a glint, and a bit of a squint
And his legs are not very long.

His name is just Ned, and he hasn't a bed,
For years he has lived in a box.
Though for him it is home, and he isn't alone,
For there is Molly, and Billy, and Pops.

With his friends he will forage for a couple of
days
In the dustbins, where they might find
treasure.
For you, and for me, it's disgusting to see,
But for them it is their only pleasure.

Birds have their nests, and foxes have
holes,
But poor Ned has no home at all.
Just a cardboard box, in a draughty street
With no one to care, or to call.

Kathy Wells

St Francis RC (Aided) First School

The Surrey Directory of Education Establishments lists our school as a cold statistic: DES No 3438; LEA No E2215; Admissions No (1988/89): 60; Approximate No on Roll: 230. However, children and parents, past and present, Governors, members of the various staffs and a large number of parishioners know that St Francis First School is something more; something very special. It is a warm, lively and caring community serving the very young of our parish. It is a school with a unique history.

The first entry in the school Log book reads, "The school opened on September 3rd with 137 children on roll and three full-time teachers, a secretary and three dinner supervisors."

That was in 1957, but the history of the school goes back even further.

Canon O'Connor, parish priest of Woking from 1952 to 1972, had planned for many years to build a school for the young Catholic children of the parish, but it was not until the Red House in Onslow Crescent, with its extensive grounds, became vacant that his dream could be realized.

Eventually, the property was purchased and renovated and made ready for its first intake: twenty children under the care of Sister Conrad.



More and more children arrived and, whilst they worked, the builders began to clear the site and to lay the foundations of the new school which was to be placed under the patronage of St Dunstan.

This school was opened in 1957 with Miss Enright as Headteacher of the Infants and Sister Conrad in charge of the Junior children. Two schools in the one building.

Monsignor Gibney, Vicar General of the Diocese of Southwark and representing the Bishop, blessed St Dunstan's School in May, 1958.

The school grew in numbers and a happy atmosphere was nurtured. Parents were invited to take an active role and provided an adventure playground, a sand-pit and a tree house. Later a swimming pool was constructed for the two schools to share.

In 1968 Miss Enright retired to live in Ireland and Miss Williams became the Headteacher.

More than anything else, Miss Williams enjoyed being with the children sharing stories of magic and fun. It was a sad day when she resigned in 1969.

Mr Dwyer was appointed to succeed Miss Williams. By then the two schools had outgrown the original premises and it was decided to build a new and separate First school in line with the policy of the Local Education Authority and its plans to reorganize Primary education throughout the County.

Mr. Dwyer

When the Convent closed in nearby Pembroke Road, the land was acquired by the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton and work began on the new venture in 1972. Every day, Mr Dwyer and a group of children would cross the road to watch the construction in progress.

St Francis was chosen as the patron for the new school and, at last, on July 9th 1973, the removal into the new building took place.

Bishop Bowen opened and blessed the replacement school on October 10th of the same year.

Mr Dwyer guided the school through several changes of policy during his seventeen years of leadership. His final, poignant entry in the school Log reads: "Mr Dwyer retired - Cornwall!"

The school Governors appointed Mr Hoppe to be Headteacher from Easter, 1986.

Miss McGeehan, Deputy Headteacher through all these years, took a well-earned retirement in 1987. Her spirit of dedication and service to the young lives on - a tribute to the past and a torch for the future. □

Dennis Hoppe

Prayer Of St. Francis Of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace; where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved, as to love; for it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

'Let the children come to me, and do not stop them, because the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these'

Mark 10:14

YOUTH

Youth activities in Woking parish have been limited for a long time, but armed with renewed enthusiasm and commitment, a number of concerned members of the parish are acknowledging the needs of youth.

The best place to start is last September, when William Newton and Fiona Lafferty re-started the Youth Club after a period of rest! It aimed to bring the youth of the parish, aged between twelve and sixteen, together on a Sunday evening. This was done with the support of Fr. Chris, Tony and Mary Box, Kathy Day, Claire Box and myself. A number of events were organised, and a competition run, to give the 'Youth Club' a new name. It has since become known as 'The Soul Club'.

Sadly, in January this year, William left for Israel and Fiona went to America. This left a vacancy open for a new coordinator, Ian Hutchinson, previously from Godalming, arrived in the parish and 'volunteered' to become the new coordinator of The Soul Club, with the continued support of the original team of helpers for which he is duly grateful. The Soul Club continues to meet from 8pm to 10pm every Sunday in the parish hall, having taken part in such activities as bowling, ice skating, and silly games! I am sure Ian and his team of helpers, can rely upon the parish's support, for the continued existence of The Soul Club and its enjoyment by the youth of the parish. Consequently more events involving the youth can be organised.

As William left for Israel, the parish also lost a Youth Contact Officer and I, being 'in the wrong place at the wrong time', was asked to take up the vacancy. Since then I have tried to make

the youth aware of the events that are being arranged for them in the deanery and diocese. Although the response has been limited, it has not been totally in vain. Could it be that I am not communicating adequately through the media that are available?

I do feel that positive support from parents would help make my job as Youth Contact Officer easier. This would be in the form of drawing their attention to notices in the parish newsletter, and posters on display in the churches. When the youth have

participated in the spiritual and social events organised for them, they will bring this experience and enthusiasm back into our parish, to aid its future growth. To those parents who are openly encouraging their children to become involved, I would like to thank you for your support.

At a deanery level, Woking has moved positively – with regular meetings of parish representatives, and the organisation of its very first social event, a barn dance which was extremely successful. The parish representatives on the Woking Deanery Youth Council are Ian Hutchinson (the Deanery Youth Coordinator), Georgina Lawes, Claire Box, Dominic Cotter and myself.

It is hoped that through RENEW, the youth of Woking parish will become more active and more directive, in the way that spiritual and social activities are organised in the parish. Not simply being recognised as the future, but also as the present, and that we are a necessary and vital part of all parish life. □

Julian Nowell

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THE SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL –

Meeting the Need of Woking . . . & Beyond

"To seek and find those who are forgotten and to bring our love to the suffering or deprived".

These words speak of the very broad scope of the work of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul – the SVP – and how we can all help in it, which this article aims to touch on.

This on a snippet of the prayers asking Our Lord's help which start every meeting of the SVP whether it is at St. Dunstan's or elsewhere in the world.

When it comes to seeking and finding "those who are forgotten" even around Woking it is surprisingly not difficult to do so.

There are forgotten, lonely people hidden in houses, homes and hospitals; those who suffer mentally or physically; those who are deprived through unemployment, low incomes, debt, broken marriages and other domestic circumstances.

It is the aim of the SVP to help where it can, and "bring" whatever "love" is most appropriate.

Through the generosity of the Parish and the people of Woking, the annual appeal made at Masses and the door-to-door Alexander Rose Day Collection help raise £2,500 and more each year which is spent by the SVP in helping a whole variety of different needs from grocery parcels at Christmas to holiday spending money for a needy family in the summer. In addition, the SVP provides support beyond Woking, in particular Third World groups with which it is "Twin-ned". In the Third World your money goes much further and, for example, £500 or so can provide cataract operations for over 300 people in India and provide living accommodation for 40 families.

But it is not only money which help the SVP. It would be hard to find the finances to pay for a new 3-piece suite very often for those

in need of such, but thanks to the great generosity of the Parish and others it has been possible to meet almost any appeal for furniture and domestic appliance like fridges and cookers. Needs for these items vary and the SVP cannot accept everything offered but with the social security changes brought about by the recent Budget it seems likely that social services and other bodies will be turning more and more to voluntary agencies like the SVP for support in providing furniture and other items for those in need, so do keep the good work up!

New members

And of course there are those who have no real material needs but simply require the comfort, support and friendship which a regular visit provides. Much of the work of the SVP locally is visiting those who just appreciate someone to talk to, those who know there is somebody they can rely on when they are in need. So there is potentially much work to be done and the need for new members to help the SVP to "find those who are forgotten and to bring love to the suffering or deprived". If you can help even in some small way, please do speak to one of the priests. For more details you can always speak to an SVP member or call Woking 61099. □

Mark Potter

Catholic Marriage Advisory Council

In an age of hi-tech cell-phones and paging systems it is a paradox that personal communications in families or between couples can be confused, fearful and misheard.

The Catholic Marriage Advisory Council offers a confidential and caring service with trained counsellors to help anyone whether single or married, suffering stressful or unhappy relationships and to help sustain and enrich marriages.

Courses for engaged couples are also run throughout the year. Just as important, teams go into senior schools to discuss the importance of stable relationships.

Our parish is served from the West Surrey Centre, which is located at The Marist Convent, Old Woking Road, West Byfleet. However, local appointments can be arranged if transport is difficult. The contact phone number for appointments or further information is Leatherhead 378853.

It goes without saying that confidentiality is one of the most important aspects of CMAC work. Sensitive and sympathetic Catholic counselling is the keynote. □



My Trip to Medjugorje

As I stepped off the coach in Medjugorje in October 1987, I thanked God for making it possible for me to come to this very special place.

In this village six teenage children, who did not have a particularly strong living faith, on 24th June 1981 saw an apparition of Our Lady and have seen her daily ever since.

As a child, I too was baptised a Catholic and had the traditional Catholic upbringing. As a teenager and through to early adulthood I rejected the Church and its teachings.

About a year ago on the BBC there was an Everyman television programme on Medjugorje which told of millions of people who had been to this village and witnessed supernatural happenings but most of all found peace with God. Inexplicably for the first time since my childhood I prayed to Our Lady to make it possible for me too to go to Medjugorje to find this peace but with a family to look after this would

prove difficult. After all these years I picked up a rosary and slowly started to learn how to really pray. Through prayer I rediscovered Jesus and Mary and their most kind and gentle love. All my years away from them I had stopped loving them but they had always loved me no matter what! My prayers were answered and I went to Medjugorje and found the peace and love of God that week in that special village.

Vision

Yes, I saw the sun spinning and turn a beautiful deep pink with three crosses superimposed upon it. Maybe I needed this sign to deepen my faith and bring it alive.

For me the highlight of the trip was meeting Our Lord in a special way in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The devotion of both priests and congregation was

very moving. We were told not to look up at the choir gallery when Our Lady appeared to the children during the recitation of the rosary every evening, as She came not to call attention to Herself but to join Her Son's people together in adoring Him. Most obeyed.

One finds in Medjugorje an unleashing of the best qualities to be found in every individual. Hours spent standing in cramped stuffy conditions inside the over-packed Church, never dampened the humour and charity of the congregation. It seemed as though Medjugorje was a model classroom where all God's children from the many different countries and religious backgrounds sought and found God's love through prayer.

So many graces does one leave Medjugorje with, so many lessons well learnt, that one could not go back to his own country unmoved, unchanged. □

Mary Cooper

Winter

As winter's mantle settles on the barren land,
And brings the frosts
To touch unwary fingers
We remember the year's beginning.
The crocus peeping through untainted snow,
And after, drifts of daffodils, an awe-inspiring
sight of beauty.

When summer's foliage dressed the trees to
shade us from the sun's hot gaze.
And brought a rainbow hue of Lupin, Foxglove,
Peony, Sweetpea.

The garden teemed with sweetly scented roses
of our dreams.

Then Autumn displayed her own glory to our
eyes, with gold and russet heads of greatest
splendour,

The daisies of Michaelmas stood before
Autumn's breezes until,

We come full circle and watch as Winter freezes,
And all is dormant.

Mary Beamish

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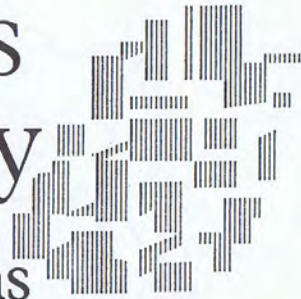
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