



CHESTER ANGLICAN CURSILLO® NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2017

Lay Director's Report

Welcome to the autumn newsletter, the nights are drawing in and I will soon be travelling to work in the dark and returning home in the dark. It sounds bleak but in the quiet of the walk into work I am open to God and use this time for Prayer and thanks.

Recently I have had a few challenges and I know that God was with me throughout; however tired and despondent I felt, God put something in place to give me a little lift just when I needed it. This reminded me that good teamwork is necessary in all areas of our life. Paul writes in **Romans Ch. 12:5** 'we are one body in union with Christ, and we are all joined together.

Another passage which has meaning to me at this time:

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12: "Two are better off than one, because together they can work more effectively. If one of them falls down, the other can help him up. But if someone is alone and falls, it's just too bad, because there is no one to help him. If it's cold, two can sleep together and stay warm but how can you keep warm by yourself. Two men can resist an attack that would defeat one man alone. A rope of three cords is hard to break." (TEV) We are better together than we are on our own.

Because of a team around me, as things felt overwhelming - my family, my Church family and my Cursillo family held me. I didn't crumble (even though I thought I might) and had support and love and prayers that helped me through.

Ultreya !



Mary Mitchell

A 'kind' thought from our Spiritual Director

Fruit of the Spirit: Kindness



I came across this interesting website recently:
<https://www.kindness.org>.

They are a group exploring the positive effects of encouraging each other to be kind. Here are some excerpts from their website:

Kindness.org: A kinder world begins with ALL of us.

We're a small nonprofit with big goals. We came together from London, New York, and beyond to answer the question:

How would our world transform if each of us put kindness front and centre in our lives?

We're a digital platform designed to reach across oceans and time zones to inspire small ripples of everyday compassion. We listen to our community, combining scientific curiosity with a willingness to nimbly put new ideas into practice.

We believe that together, our ripples of kindness can create massive waves of change.

We believe kindness can change the world. That's why we've enlisted the support of Oxford University to study, investigate, and explore kindness all over the globe.

Our hypothesis

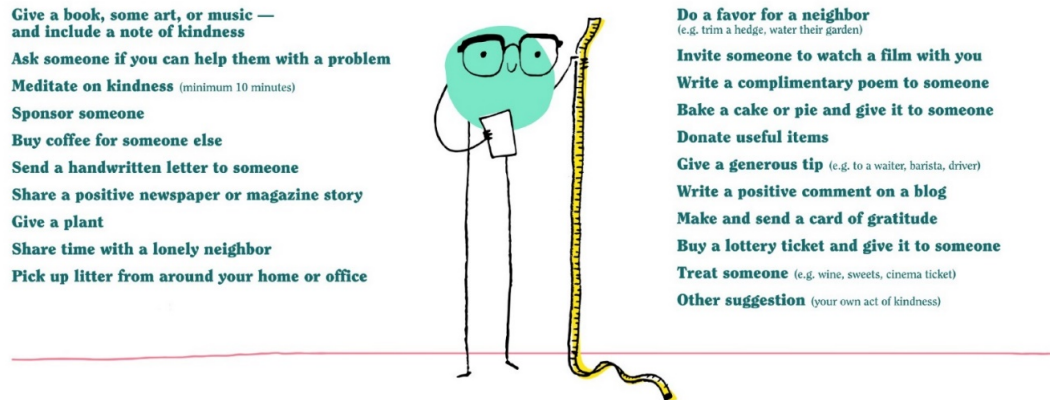
We sought to test the hypothesis that engaging in 7 days of acts of kindness would have a positive effect on (i.e. would increase) happiness, life satisfaction, compassion, trust, positivity regarding humanity, and social connection.

At the beginning of the experiment, the [different groups] were given a list of kind acts to choose from (or, in the case of Observers, to look out for) and were instructed to carry out at least one of these kind acts per day.

At the end of the day an email was sent asking participants to indicate how many (and which) acts of kindness they had carried out that day.

We specifically selected acts based on affordability, ease of opportunity and commonality. Overall twenty-one acts were offered so that all participants could

find something suitable and achievable. We wanted people to have a choice of kind acts—and some flexibility in how they were performed—as research has shown that autonomy is an important factor in the relationship between kindness and wellbeing (Nelson et al. 2015).



What does our study show?

We found that our measures increased in the intervention groups, but not in the control group. **That means that the kindness intervention had a positive effect on wellbeing and positive social emotions.**

We also found that the degrees of change in wellbeing and social perceptions were dependent on the number of acts completed—that is, the more you engage in kindness, the greater your wellbeing, compassion, trust, positivity about humanity, and connection.

God asks us to be kind to each other, and I love it that He knows this will also help us to be happier.

Have a look at the list they used. Some of them sound very like the things we do in Cursillo!

Maybe you are already including similar acts of kindness in your everyday life, but if not why not read through the list and see if there are a few you could try out each day?

It comes with a guarantee from God: kindness makes you happier.

Rev Vicki Schofield

Thoughts on a weekend



From a participant viewpoint.....

We were both told beforehand what it would be like and it was at that point that I (Adele) realised that although we were told there would be some little surprises, this wasn't because it was secretive or that they were trying to 'trip us up' on the weekend but it was because other people who had been on previous weekends wanted to show us how much they loved us and that they wanted us to enjoy being surrounded by Gods love and to grow closer to Him over the weekend itself.

So, even though we were told most of what would happen, it didn't spoil things, because for us the weekend wasn't just a series of activities or events, but it was more of a journey into a closer relationship with God and with those around us.

For me (Callum) I found it very encouraging to see lay people, who had previously been on a Cursillo weekend, having grown in confidence enough to lead group sessions, give talks and even organise the whole weekend.

We both went with an open mind, without pre set expectations and were willing to accept whatever God gave us and we felt surrounded by prayer for the whole weekend.

Be warned though, if you are thinking that a Cursillo weekend will be a quiet retreat where you can sit and ponder, then maybe this is not for you, because it consists of talks and discussions as well as quiet times where you can draw closer to God- one of the most moving times for both of us was the festival of light on Saturday evening.

For me (Adele),going on Cursillo has changed my life, because I came to understand that God loves me for me, just as I am and I am good enough for him- I cannot make him love me anymore than he already does because his love is limitless. I had often wondered what it meant in Galatians 2:20 'it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me' and after Cursillo I can say that for me , I feel I now know what that means.

We both fully recommend the weekend - if you are thinking about it but are unsure, we would say 'go for it', but go with an open mind. You will be surrounded by love, good company, good food and lots of cake!

Adele & Callum Boothroyd



Other comments...

"Cursillo gave me a whole new perspective on my faith"

"Cursillo brought me closer to God"

"Through Cursillo I know God loves me warts & all!"

From a Staff member.....

I have been asked to share my experience of staffing a Cursillo weekend for the first time - well here goes.....

It began with an unknown phone number on the caller list; message not left. This happened a few times until I was around one day and picked up the phone. It was Kath Higgins, whom I had met on my Cursillo weekend in October 2015 - just four months before. She asked how would I feel about staffing on the upcoming May weekend at Wistaston! Overwhelmed, not up to it - I was too new to Cursillo for this. What could I offer? Kath told me and reassured me and I said yes. I then spent time worrying and asking why me? It was a very humbling experience as I was still so new to this community that had shown me God's love in all its glory!

The first training day came and I met other staff members who all seemed to come with a great deal of staffing experience. That feeling of inadequacy came over me again but there wasn't any need for it. I came as a stranger to most and left knowing I was part of a very loving, caring Christian group.

The weekend was as wonderful as my own but from a different aspect. I was part of the Cursillo community in giving hospitality to those tentative participants. The hospitality, which we had, all so generously received on our own weekends. I became more aware of just how far prayers and support for this weekend had come; all given selflessly. The support from staff members for each other was wonderful; it was a truly joyous and fulfilling time. I once again experienced the loving Christian community in action that so restored me on my own weekend.

So if that unknown number calls - answer. It will lead you to a most rewarding encounter of Christianity in action. Having received you will now give, having experienced it you will witness the changes in people as they come in contact with God's love in its truest way; you will be part of a group of people who come together in action to make each weekend its own unique experience.

Sue Lewis





Banner Blog

In March I went to St Luke's in Holmes Chapel for the Diocesan Ultreya. I do enjoy my outings after being rolled up in my bag in between.

Then it was time for the next weekend #54, Sue Joy and Carol Thayer made the weekend a joyful, prayerful and thought provoking one. Yes I earwig!! I love listening to the talks and discussions and am amazed that each weekend brings something new to the mix.

We went to St Peters in Elworth for the AGM and Diocesan. It brought back lovely memories. The last time I went there was at a BACC meeting and if you remember I wrote about how I shared the stage with the BACC banner.

Oh I need to tell you a bit of news I overheard while resting at Mary's.....she was talking about visiting Chester Cathedral to start organising for the National Ultreya in 2019.....I suddenly realised that I will be a very special banner that day representing the hosting Diocese. I will keep my ear to the ground and let you know as I get to know more.

Then it was off to the National Ultreya in Southwell. After hearing that we were going to host I took even more notice of what happens. BUT oh dear! While waiting for Mary to get me from the room I was waiting in for the walk of witness I fell over (ouch). The wooden ends of my pole broke, but Mary and Graham did a running repair so my ribbons didn't come off, but I felt a bit self-conscious. Soon we were in the Minster and I was engrossed in the service and forgot about my woes.

Next outing #55 can't wait to tell you all about it.

Chester Cursillo sweatshirts/polo shirts

Hillary Merrington has offered to co-ordinate an order for sweatshirts and polo shirts.

The cost will be

Sweatshirts are £13.80 plus VAT

Polo shirts are £12.18 plus VAT



Hillary will be at the Diocesan Ultreya on Saturday 24th November with the catalogue. If anyone has a sweatshirt/polo shirt from the last order please would they wear/bring it so people can see the sizes. You can contact Hillary on hillary.merrington@btinternet.com

Newsletter items



Have you got anything we could publish in the next newsletter?

Have you read a really good book or for that matter a really bad one you want to tell us about?

Have you had an opportunity to witness that you'd like to share but don't want to stand up and talk about at an Ultreya?

Please send your items for inclusion in the next newsletter to the Communications Officers.

At the moment we publish 2 newsletters a year but if we get enough items we're happy to increase that to 3 or even 4 a year!



Like it or hate it social media is here to stay & we've joined the 21st century with our own Facebook page. It's an open page so anyone can see it & comment on it. So please 'like' us and leave a message. If you have any photos you think would look better than my T shirt emblem please send them my way!

Carol

Who's who in Chester Cursillo – members of the Secretariat

Lay Director laydirector@chestercursillo.org.uk	Mary Mitchell
Spiritual Director spiritualdirector@chestercursillo.org.uk	Vicki Schofield
Hon Secretary secretary@chestercursillo.org.uk	Anne Smith
Hon Treasurer secretary@chestercursillo.org.uk	Nick Hutt
Weekend Co-ordinator weekend@chestercursillo.org.uk	Kath Higgins Pam Ross*
Fourth Day Officer fourthday@chestercursillo.org.uk	Sue Joy
Palanca Secretary palanca@chestercursillo.org.uk	Pat Riches Sue Lewis*
BACC Rep baccrep@chestercursillo.org.uk	Sue Hutt
Communications officers	Carol Thayer &

*Taking over the role from November