

## From our Lay Director, Wanda Maciuszko.

Dear all

I send you my sincere thoughts and prayers that you are all keeping safe and well as we go into another period of lockdown. It is a hard time for everyone but particularly difficult for our fellow Cursillistas facing illness and not just Coronavirus, our Cursillistas undergoing treatment for serious conditions such as cancer or anxiously waiting for urgent treatment, as well as those on their own at home feeling isolated and lonely.



It has been very frustrating for me not to be able to meet you in person as I would have normally been able to do but please be reassured we will meet again as soon as circumstances permit. York 30 will now be from 11th to 14th November 2021. The Secretariat has planned a provisional programme for 2021: Jonathan is planning a Lent Course for use by individual churches, we hope to have an AGM in March 2021, an Ultreya in May 2021 and a Cursillo renewal meeting in June/July 2021. We need to be patient and use this time for reflection and prayer as well as communicating with each other as best we can. To this end Trevor is organising a Zoom Ultreya in early December. This will not be the same as a 'face to face' Ultreya but an additional way of accessing Cursillo encouragement. The strength of Cursillo is our face to face meetings and we must continue to base our future development on this principle.

Psalm 1:3 inspires me. *"He is like a tree planted by streams of water which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers."* At the moment I think of Cursillo as a tree which is in a dormant state but which will bloom again.

Prayer continues to be our strength and I would like to ask you for a month of prayer in December 2020. Please pray for specific areas of the Diocese on different days of the week as set out in the Prayer Diary on the back page. This is loosely based on where we have members of Cursillo. The Secretariat is going to set up a more personal prayer chain as well so please let me know of anyone who needs particular prayers.

I will say of the Lord "He is my refuge and my fortress: My God in Him I will trust."

*Love and blessings. Ultreya!*

## York Cursillo 'Zoom' Ultreya

### Saturday 5th December 3.00pm till 4.30pm

Some of us have been able to meet over the summer in our Reunion Groups which has been a real blessing. But we've all missed our Ultreyas. Meeting via the internet won't be the same but it will hopefully be a help. So you're invited to join us on Zoom if you can. Just click on the link in the email that sent you this newsletter just before 3pm on 5th December (it'll be sent out again by email nearer the time). Click to join with audio and video when invited to on screen. You don't have to download Zoom or register, just join the meeting. Hope to see you there.

## Our Lay Director, Revd Jonathan Couper, writes.

Dear All,

With the lockdown, even before Advent, Christmas seems ever nearer, and I have been drawn to some words in Ezekiel 40 :4. **“look with your eyes, and hear with your ears, and set your heart upon all that I shall show you, for you were brought here in order that I might show it to you.”** Those words would have been relevant to the shepherds who came to the stable in Bethlehem and the wise men who visited their home in Bethlehem a few weeks later. These words are also relevant to us in 2020.

This season God has brought us to a place where everything is different. Let us take the opportunity to look back along the path God has brought us in our life thanking Him for past years of grace. But from this place we can also look forward to the road ahead which eventually leads to heaven but on which we now walk with God on earth.

My letter this month contains some values for the road ahead amid these COVID-19 times .

**Be kind** ( merciful). There is a lot of grief around and only kindness deals with grief (see Job 6:2). Job tells his false comforters that if he were in their place and they were in his, he would speak kindness unconditionally. (Job 16:3,4, 6:14) So must we! (Luke 6:36,37)

**Do good.** Goodness is a universal language that everyone can understand and helps people turn their hearts to God. Jesus said “Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” (Matthew 5:16) Goodness comes from our relationship with God and obedience to his will (Romans 8:28). It is not stopped by whatever is happening in the world. The source of that goodness is God’s love. Nothing in all creation can separate us from His love (Romans 8:35), so each day we are “good to go”.

**Be practical.** Stick to actions not theories. In lockdown, action may be severely limited, but cards and phone calls, skype and letters are still possible as well as a multitude of other things we might see to do at this time. The question we should have in our minds is what does Jesus want me to do? Try to avoid the “ why is this happening” question. When his disciples saw a man born blind (see John 9) they asked Jesus why was he born blind – was it his sin or his parents. Jesus refuses to go there and instead says this is for the glory of God and proceeds to heal him. Jesus’ focus was **what** he should do **not why**. Leave the why questions to the scientists looking for a cure or those identifying trends of infection.

**Rest in the grace** that your faith gives you access to (Romans 5:2). God is with you. Jesus’ death on a cross was for you at every stage of your life. You just had to receive his offer made at the cross to know God in your life. Whatever troubles we face, God faces them with us. The shadow of death may be cast on our path but the eternal God is with us, and shadows do not last! The faith that gives you access to grace also has brought peace with God. Walk in this peace “that passes all understanding”(Philippians 4:7) that Jesus gave to us for our journey in life.(John 14:27,16:33)

*God bless, Jonathan.*





## **Apostolic Action**

### **Newsletter editor Trevor interviews Ros Dykes about her work as a volunteer with the Samaritans.**

*Ros, how long have you been involved in Samaritans and what is your role?*

I started training in October 2016, so I've been involved for 4 years. I had wanted to become a Samaritan 25 years ago, but I was too busy working, being a Vicar's wife, running a Guide company and looking after 3 children. It was at a Pastoral training session at St Mark's, Newby, when the Samaritans came to talk to us about their work, that a lightbulb went on in my head and I felt that God was telling me to try to become a volunteer.

My role started off as a listener on the phones, and then I became a leader where I stay at home and debrief the listeners at the Centre. I was then asked to be Volunteer Support Deputy Director when we chose a new Director 18 months ago. This means that my team of 4 volunteers can keep in touch with all the other volunteers at times if needed.

*Can you tell me about the recruitment and training process?*

Potential volunteers are selected to go on the training after an interview by 2 members. You have to provide 2 references. Training lasts about 10 weeks and is usually done at the Centre once a week. There are various modules to go through and there are role play exercises. During the current Covid-19 pandemic the training has to be done on Zoom, which is more difficult. Often 7 or 8 people will start the training but, for various reasons, maybe only 4 or 5 will finish.

At the end of training the volunteers progress to the 'ops room' where they will have 2 mentors and they listen to their mentors on the phones or watch them doing emails until the mentors and the trainee are happy for them to take their own phone calls or write emails. Once this is accomplished the trainees become 'potential volunteers' and they can take phone calls on their own. After 6 months they become full listening volunteers. When we listen to calls there are always 2 listeners in the 'ops room'.

We always need more volunteers and so we do outreach work, not only to recruit people but to tell people that we are here to listen to them if they are in distress.

*Ros, as a Christian do you see this a part of your 'Apostolic action'?*

Yes, I do see this volunteering as part of my Christian apostolic action, by helping the more vulnerable or anxious people in the community. I provide a 'listening ear'. I can't give advice, but I can signpost callers on to various agencies such as Childline etc. We are not allowed to self-disclose and are nonjudgmental, and therefore I am not allowed to bring my faith into the conversations.

However, I always pray to God when I am driving to the Centre to do my shift that he will give me the right words to say at the right time. Nowadays we can reveal that we are Samaritans and don't have to keep it secret as we get phone calls from a national Centre and not locally. Only about 20% of the calls we get are people either talking about suicide or who are in the midst of it. I do feel God has given me more empathy and compassion to deal with the callers since I did my training. It also helps with my pastoral work at church.

Personally, I find it very fulfilling and I believe that God lead me to do this, to be his ears and mouth. Before I started training one friend was worried that I wouldn't be able to listen as I talk a lot, and another thought I wouldn't be able to cope with the emotional side and would bring the callers' problems home with me. However, we have such a good debriefing session and people we can ring any time to help us that I have been fine and have coped well. I thank God every day as it has also brought me new friends in Scarborough.

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## **Anne Couper explains her role as Palanca Secretary on the Secretariat**

During normal pre COVID times, I look on the national Anglican Cursillo web page to note when all the Cursillo weekends are taking place in the many dioceses up and down the United Kingdom. I do this with the purpose of sending palanca greetings, prayers and blessings on behalf of our York Diocese Cursillo each time a weekend is taking place.

Our palanca greetings are sent to the corresponding Palanca Secretary who passes them to be collated alongside all the other palanca arriving from the other Cursillo dioceses. So, when a Cursillo weekend is taking place, there is always encouraging palanca in the form of posters containing art, photos, Bible verses and messages of support and encouragement, which is displayed for the pilgrims and teams to read and enjoy.

When it is our turn to host a weekend, we too receive an abundance of lovely encouraging palanca blessings – greetings, prayers, art work which is displayed for the pilgrims and team during the weekend.



## **LOOKING FORWARD TO YORK 30**

As Cursillistas we look back with great pleasure at the experience of our Cursillo weekend. No matter when we experienced it, the events of the weekend – the spiritual refreshment, the deep longing to get closer to Christ, and the invigorating power of the Holy Spirit, not to mention the fellowship and fun – all combined to indelibly imprint the experience on each one of us.



Sadly, York 30 had to be postponed due to the coronavirus, but the team, poised like coiled springs (well, almost!) are still ready to welcome a new group of pilgrims to share the unique experience of York 30 next year.

During lockdown the Holy Spirit has still been at work, and on many occasions we have seen God in action in our own local neighbourhoods. As we look forward to returning to some sense of normality, the team for York 30 are gearing up for our weekend in 2021, now booked for 11<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> November.

Now is the time to look forward and pray that future pilgrims will become apparent to each and every one of us. We all need to start praying for pilgrims and their sponsors to come forward. Cursillo did not disappear during lockdown although it may have seemed far away. But with the end of night comes a bright new dawning. We look forward to welcoming the pilgrims to York 30.

Ultreya!

**Brian and Margaret James, Joint Lay Rectors, York 30**

***Remember that pilgrims are invited to be our guests for the weekend, they are not asked to pay for it. If they enjoy the weekend and would like to make an anonymous donation towards the next weekend, either during or after the end of the weekend, then this would be gratefully received.***

***For your information the current cost of the 3-day weekend is £230. This covers accommodation, all meals and refreshments from Thursday evening meal to Sunday afternoon tea, and all materials used.***

# YORK 30

**Joint Lay Rectors for the weekend are Margaret and Brain James**

Please pray for them and every member of the team. The weekend has been moved (again) because of COVID to November 11<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> 2021

They informed their team of the decision and this is a taster from the encouraging comments they received.



Dear Margaret & Brian  
Disappointing news from you but I have put November 11th-14th 2021 in my diary & will keep praying that all will be well then.  
I am so grateful every day for my Cursillo experience & the difference being a Cursillista has made to my life.  
Being positive it gives us more time to encourage more pilgrims, pray & be ready when the Lord calls us.  
Stay safe. God bless Susan



*It is a difficult time, but at the end of the day Gods timing is always right.*

*The dates are in my diary.*

*Every blessing Dianne*



**Dear Brain and Margaret**

**We can only plan a day, a week, a month at a time and remember the words of Jesus:**

**Matthew 6:34 'Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own'.**

**So we are to make the most of each day and wait upon the Lord for His redemptive plan in His way and time to be revealed.**

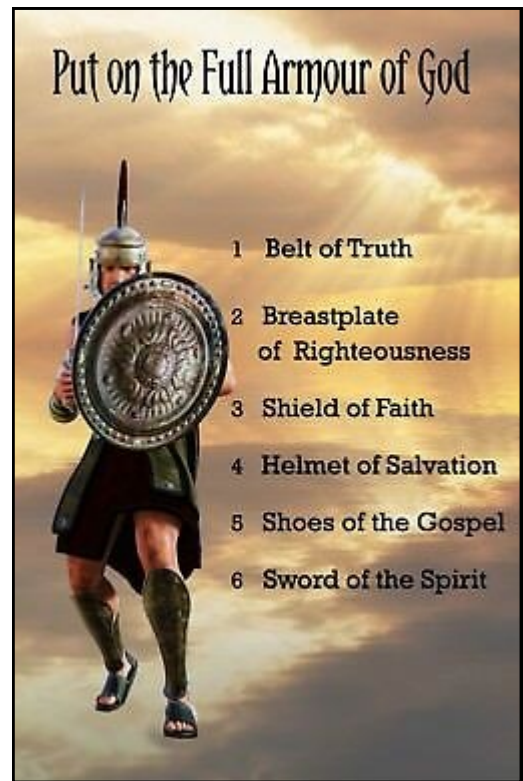
**Every blessing, Dobrila**

## Spiritual aids—From Jayne Moxon

Recently at a communion service I was listening to the sermon being given by the vicar. She was referring to the Armour of God that protects us spiritually and from evil in its many forms.

She was, of course, speaking metaphorically. However, having just started a course of chemotherapy for the fifth time in six years, I am now quite convinced that I must literally be wearing the Armour of God. It is not just shielding me from evil spirits but also protecting me from illness. This enables me to continue my apostolic duties according to God's holy will.

# ULTREYA



*Well folks, we see that things seem to be getting tougher again - just when we're wanting to look forward to happier times! But this patch of history has to be 'what it is,' and we know that when in times past, life presented difficulties they *were* eventually overcome.*

*In the meantime, Cursillo Secretariat wants to send another message to all Cursillistas with whom we are in contact. We want you to know that you're not forgotten. We care about each and every one of you, and we hope that like us, you raise a smile when remembering the happy times we have shared.*

*We look forward to one day being with everyone once again.  
Meanwhile, remember . . . . .*

***Somebody loves you more than you know.**  
**Somebody goes with you, wherever you go.**  
**Somebody really and truly cares.**  
**And lovingly listens to all of your prayers***

***Don't doubt for a minute that this is true,  
for God loves His children and takes care of them, too.***

***Be sure, all his treasures are yours to share  
if you love Him completely and show him you care.***

***So walk in His footsteps, having faith to believe;  
whatever is needful, you will receive.***

*For now, if there is anything we might be able  
to help with, please let us know.*





## **November Nature** - By Hannah Grace, our 12yr old Scottish correspondent

Rain off leaves, drooped with the weight of water.

Moss is fluffy - a rich, earthy green, filled with moisture.

Sticks crack under chunky walking boots, the bark roughly marbled,

Every detail is effortlessly swamped with perfection.

The earth, cool, rich beneath our feet, magically calm and still.

The thick air surrounding me feels wet and on-edge, but just steady,  
although it could gracefully pour at any moment in front of me.

Everything is silent, only my polite footsteps explore peacefully.

Raindrops race down windows drawing shimmer on the glass.

The harsh wind tangles my hair, swirling somehow elegantly as it brushes past.

Proud trees tower over me, the sap drips with a clean, yet sweet smell.

The waterfall spills confidently, the water ripples like a clear, smooth sapphire gel.

Auburn leaves crunch, and damp dents in the ground fill with rainwater.

The earth beneath my feet is rough, yet so smoothly textured.

The air smells cool, relaxing and earthy - yet warmly fragrant.

So loosely at ease - a bubble of cosy and calm, the stresses of life vacant.



### **Provisional programme for 2021**

- Lent - Jonathan is planning a Lent Course for use by individual churches
- AGM in March 2021
- Ultreya in May 2021
- Cursillo renewal meeting in June/July 2021.

Full details will be posted as soon as definite arrangements can be made.

## Thoughts from my garden by Jan Jeffreys (Oxford Cursillo)

During the summer some anaemic looking runner beans and some spindly-stalked roses set me thinking about compost. I must confess to being a very inexperienced gardener, although I do watch “Gardeners’ World” on TV, probably more because of Monty Don and Nigel (of blessed memory) than any real gardening enthusiasm. I did a bit of research on-line and decided a mix of fish and bone might be the best compost for my ailing plants. This was duly purchased and administered and I waited to see the results and hoped I had got it right.



Cursillo— God’s compost??

This led me on to musing on compost generally. Every so often I have a look at what’s been going on inside myself. I try to weed out all the faults and failings that have sprung up since my last spring clean. For the corners I have missed my spiritual director is a great help. As spiritual directors get to know you they become remarkably astute. They will gently nudge you to be a bit more thorough and let some light in. I find we look at all the rubbishy/weedy bits, resolve to do better and then hand them all over to God, leaving the “composting” to Him. He will work on it and make it into something useable. Like salt, if we have lost our savour we are no use to anybody.

Discussing this with Peter over breakfast the next morning he said, “Well, we are all a bit of a compost heap.” He might be right. Really, all of us form part of God’s compost heap. He works on us, mixing us all in, lets us ferment for a while and then spreads us out, now rich in nutrients into the world. Do we enrich it? Are we in the right soil encouraging new growth or are we the wrong mix for our current plans? We have to wait and watch and maybe change the compost.

Cursillo is a great mix of compost if you think about it. We are such a diverse bunch aren’t we? Group reunion proves this. Ultreya’s help us mix in and grow together and some absolutely wonderful plants have grown up among us. Do you know some? Of course you do. You are one of God’s very favourite plants and you give him joy and pleasure wherever you are in his garden. By the way, my roses perked up and bloomed beautifully, but there was not a single runner bean! Keep on “weeding”, and do read 1 Corinthians 1 v26-29. Ultreya!

### **YORK CURSILLO MEMBERSHIP— IMPORTANT !!**

We will be updating our membership list in March 2021. We need to have your signed permission to communicate with you because of the Data Protection Act. **We do not appear to have this for everyone.** If you have sent a signed membership for this year 2020 you will not need to send this. However if we do not have written permission from you we will not be able to send you a membership form for next year. So please let us know.

Please fill in the slip below and return by the end of January 2021 to

**Lynn Stephenson 7 Gallands Rd Sproatley Hull HU11 4XS**

I give permission for my contact details to be held on the York Cursillo Membership Database.

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

EMAIL .....

PHONE NUMBER .....

SIGNED .....

DATE .....



## Wednesday 11th November 2020 makes the Centenary of the burial of the Unknown Warrior in Westminster Abbey.

On November 7th, 1920, in strictest secrecy, four unidentified British bodies were exhumed from temporary battlefield cemeteries at Ypres, Arras, the Asine and the Somme. None of the soldiers who did the digging were told why. The bodies were taken by field ambulance to GHQ at St-Pol-Sur-Ter Noise. Once there, the bodies were draped with the union flag. Sentries were posted and Brigadier-General Wyatt and a Colonel Gell, both blind-folded, selected one body at random. The other three were reburied. A French Honour Guard was selected and stood by the coffin overnight of the chosen soldier overnight.

On the morning of the 8th November, a specially designed coffin made of oak from the grounds of Hampton Court arrived and the Unknown Warrior was placed inside. On top was placed a crusaders sword and a shield on which was inscribed: "A British Warrior who fell in the GREAT WAR 1914-1918 for King and Country".

On the 9th of November, the Unknown Warrior was taken by horse-drawn carriage through Guards of Honour and the sound of tolling bells and bugle calls to the quayside. There, he was saluted by Marechal Foch and loaded onto HMS Vernon bound for Dover. The coffin stood on the deck covered in wreaths, surrounded by the French Honour Guard.

Upon arrival at Dover, the Unknown Warrior was met with a nineteen gun salute, something that was normally only reserved for Field Marshals. A special train had been arranged and he was then conveyed to Victoria Station, London. He remained there overnight, and, on the morning of the 11th of November, he was finally taken to Westminster Abbey.

The idea of the unknown warrior was thought of by a Padre called David Railton who had served on the front line during the Great War. The union flag he had used as an altar cloth whilst at the front was the one that had been draped over the coffin. It was his intention that all of the relatives of the 517,773 combatants whose bodies had not been identified could believe that the Unknown Warrior could very well be their lost husband, father, brother or son...

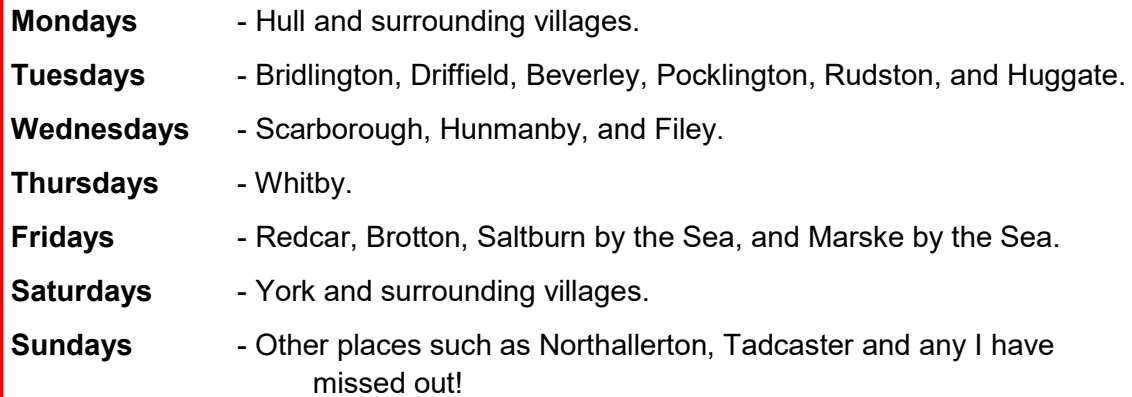
THIS is the reason we wear poppies. We do not glorify war. We remember, with humility, the great and the ultimate sacrifices that were made, not just in this war, but in every war and conflict where our service personnel have fought to ensure the liberty and freedoms that we now take for granted.

Every year, on the 11th of November, we remember the Unknown Warrior.

"At the going down of the sun, and in the morning, we will remember them."



## December Prayer Diary



|                   |                                                                            |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Mondays</b>    | - Hull and surrounding villages.                                           |
| <b>Tuesdays</b>   | - Bridlington, Driffield, Beverley, Pocklington, Rudston, and Huggate.     |
| <b>Wednesdays</b> | - Scarborough, Hunmanby, and Filey.                                        |
| <b>Thursdays</b>  | - Whitby.                                                                  |
| <b>Fridays</b>    | - Redcar, Brotton, Saltburn by the Sea, and Marske by the Sea.             |
| <b>Saturdays</b>  | - York and surrounding villages.                                           |
| <b>Sundays</b>    | - Other places such as Northallerton, Tadcaster and any I have missed out! |

### **Contact details.**

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**Rev. Jonathan Couper**: 07710 257550 [spiritualdirector@yorkcursillo.org](mailto:spiritualdirector@yorkcursillo.org)

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this issue of York Diocese Anglican Cursillo Newsletter.

The next issue is planned for the spring and items for inclusion should be sent to: [trevorking3355@gmail.com](mailto:trevorking3355@gmail.com) to arrive not later than February 15th, 2021.

Please contact me with ideas for articles well before this date.

Trevor King, 4th Day Officer: 07941 338466



**York Anglican Cursillo is faith funded, so thank you to the increasing number of Cursillistas who support York Anglican Cursillo through Gift Aid donations, particularly by monthly standing order. Under Gift Aid, each £1 donated is worth £1.25 to Oxford Anglican Cursillo, the extra 25p coming courtesy of HM Revenue and Customs. If you would like to start making monthly donations, please contact:**

**Janet Green our Treasurer.**

**01723 449940 [janetcffi@gmail.com](mailto:janetcffi@gmail.com)**

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