



22 May 2012

Dear Companion,

SPRING 2012 NEWSLETTER

'By their fruits ye shall know them' Mat 7:20

LOURDES

It was wonderful to see so many Companions in Lourdes on the Order's May pilgrimage. It is always such an amazing week, helped this year at last by some sunshine, and another great opportunity for us actively to contribute to the work of the Order.

It was a particular pleasure for us to get together in such numbers at the Companions Reception (paid for by separate donation), which I trust will continue as an established part of our calendar (apologies to the team on duty and anyone else who didn't get there, we'll make sure you get there next year).

The Reception was not just great fun though, but a chance to reflect on my first year as Chairman. It was also an opportunity to thank our regional co-ordinators for all their energy and hard work in developing the CoM in their areas, and Lalla and Maggie for their administrative support. And to issue a vote of thanks to all of you (dear readers) who by your prayers, subscriptions and hands on actions are achieving our mission of practising our faith and practising charity.

Special mention to our HP Companions, Caroline, Anne, Joan and our Birmingham Ladies for their prayers. It was great also that you could join Adrian (Birmingham), Alice (Nairobi), Patrick and other Companions for supper in the Bronx after the Reception. Thank you again for your continued support.

If we can all bring a fraction of the love we find in Lourdes back to the UK that would be achievement enough. Indeed as part of the CoM's on-going commitment to our HP's, if you are able to stay in touch with anyone who is local to you, that would be fantastic.

There is also much to report from around the UK:-

Birmingham & West Midlands: Adrian de Redman [blue.candle2@hotmail.com – 07799 188 628]

Congratulations to Adrian de Redman and his Birmingham Companions on their mini-pilgrimage in honour of and devotion to the Blessed Karl of Austria on 21 April 2012. Also to Adrian and all those Companions from Birmingham who came on the Lourdes Pilgrimage and supported our Reception in such numbers.

It is very encouraging to see such an active and expanding group in Birmingham, and particularly their commitment to prayer and the essential spiritual dimension of the CoM. In this regard many thanks to the Birmingham Companions including Ann Tomlinson for their weekly prayer of the Rosary for our work.

Plans are now well advanced for the Newman Pilgrimage on **09 June 2012**, to include Mass and a lunch to follow. In addition the monthly meetings at the Birmingham Oratory (see the notice at the Church door) continue.

Please be in touch with Adrian to obtain details of the Newman Pilgrimage, next monthly meeting and other Birmingham activities.

Oxford University CoM: Fra' John Eidinow OM [john.eidinow@stb.ox.ac.uk]

John Eidinow is working on the development of the Companions in Oxford University, as well as attending at the London Open House when his commitments allow (see below).

After the success of the Owlpen Easter Day of Recollection, plans are afoot for a Retreat/Open Day for Companions and possibly OSJCT care homes at Merton College in the summer; details will be posted as soon as available.

John would as always very much like to receive information from Companions about any sons, daughters, God-children, etc., and (ex-)OMV who are students at the University whom he might enlist.

Scotland: Liam Devlin [liamdevlin@musician.org – 07968 119 895]

The Companions in Scotland are also very busy particularly under the able direction of Liam Devlin, Glasgow coordinator.

The Spring trip to Kenya led by Liam together with a number of CoM (including Companions from London) was by all accounts a great success. Alice Murphy was full of praise for their efforts and contribution to the work of Dr Nurein at the Hospital in Lamu and support for the Nairobi Slums Project. The small house in the grounds of the hospital which was made habitable with some of the monies donated through Scottish Companions is currently occupied by an Order volunteer working in hospital, assisting with their HIV programme as well as doubling up as a scrub nurse in the operating theatre.

Back at home in Aberdeenshire Gordon Brankin has taken up the reins. He is organising a group of Companions and anyone interested to attend the annual celebration of the Scalan

Seminary on 01 July 2012. Last year's Mass celebrated by Bishop Conti was attended by some 160 people, and we were well represented.

Gordon is organising a weekend trip to attend the Mass. Accommodation if needed has already been reserved with Fr Colin Stewart at the self-catering facility at the Tomintoul Parish centre and mini-bus transport can be laid on. If you would like to join in please contact Gordon on gordonibrankin@btinternet.com (note the extra 'i').

Meanwhile amongst our regular activities Liam is working on a proposal that in Autumn 2012 or Spring 2013 we undertake to provide a holiday weekend for a group of people with special needs, possibly at the Whithaugh Trust Centre, Newcastleton, Scottish Borders.

Finally, and most imminently in support of Order charities including the work of the Companions, Susan Macgregor has agreed to open her garden to the public on **09 June 2012**. Many thanks indeed to her and her family, and everyone who can get along in support.

The Northern Marches: Fred Wyrley-Birch [f.wyrley-birch@andersonandgarland.com – 07790 132 834]

Thanks to Fred for his help in Lourdes and with our reception. At home Fred is working on pulling together the Companions and the Members of the Order in his area and pursuing various initiatives. He will be helping me on Comcompanions (see below).

Please be in touch with Fred and give him all the support you can. In particular if you have any friends, relatives or contacts in the Newcastle area whom you think may be interested in getting involved point them in Fred's direction.

Gloucestershire & Wiltshire: Sarah Cornell [sarahcornell@sky.com - 07817 499 829]

Thanks to everyone who contributed to the wonderful day of recollection on 29 March 2012 in preparation for Easter at Owlpen Manor. It was a great success, attended by some 60 people.

Particular thanks of course to Nicholas and Karin Mander for opening their home to us, to Dom Aidan Bellenger OSB for celebrating Mass and of course to Sarah for her efforts in leading the organisation. (My only regret is I was stuck in Court, but here's hoping for next year.)

Companions will I hope be pleased to know that we have been able to meet a special request from one of the OSJ Care Homes, with which through Sarah we are specifically involved, to supply two (Jubilee) garden benches for the use and enjoyment of residents.

Please be in touch with Sarah to support her continuing efforts and for further information on upcoming activities.

South East: Jamie O'Meara [jamie.omeara@btinternet.com - 07771 566 100]

In furtherance of one of the CoM's key objectives, to volunteer in and support the OSJ Care Homes, I am pleased to announce (to those who have not heard already) that on **Saturday 26 May 2012** a group of Companions will be assisting in putting on a Jubilee Tea Party at the St. Wilfrid's OSJ Care Home in Arundel.

Any ready willing and able Companions who can be there to help are asked to be in touch with Jamie as soon as possible, time is obviously short. This is a great initiative and I hope will be fully supported. See you there!

London: Peter Allingham, [peter@ancient.co.uk - 07973 550 319]

Our CoM Open House on **Tuesday evenings** at St. Patricks, Soho Square feeding the 'forgotten' homeless particularly from Eastern Europe are in full swing. Thanks to Fr Alexander Sherbrooke for allowing us into his Parish centre for this work.

Support continues to be fantastic, with large groups of volunteers turning up every week now providing at least 60 hot meals a week to the homeless and hungry. On top of this we provide many take-away meals.

You are all very welcome to come along. The more the merrier; and it helps with the prayers and hymn singing that tops and tails the evening. (Enter St. P's from the Tottenham Court access to the parish centre, from 16.00hrs to help with the cooking through to the floor mopping at 20.30hrs).

Although it costs only between £1.60-2.50 per week per cover, there are some concerns about the total costs of this operation. Suffice to say we are monitoring the costs and seeking to reduce them where we can. We are also looking at the possibility of a lower cost, more scaleable model that we can start up in addition in other locations, and I am working on this with Peter A and Tatty D.

Well done and thank you to everybody who comes along or cooks from home or supports us in other ways.

Thank you also to Fr Stuart and all those who made it to the London Companions Mass on 21 March 2012.

South West: Duncan McKechnie, [dajmck@tiscali.co.uk - 07990 594 441]

Duncan has now confirmed the CoM Summer Camp 2012, for the disabled children from the St. Rose RC School and their carers at the Calvert Trust Exmoor. This wonderful holiday cannot be afforded by the School and is only possible because of the financial support provided by CoM from your subscriptions. Thank you.

The Camp will run from Monday 09 July 2012 to 13 July 2012. Mass for those on the holiday and any local Companions or members of the Order who wish to attend, will probably be Monday afternoon (time to be confirmed; Duncan will have this information shortly).

Please can we have volunteers from amongst our younger Companions or children or God children of CoM. This is a fantastic week for all involved, as Anna and Emma who volunteered last year can testify.

Kenya (not strictly a region of course)

As referred to above, the CoM continues to support and provide financial assistance to the community health centre project in the Nairobi slums and the Lamu Hospital, particularly via our Scottish contingent, and not least through the efforts of Liam and Jan Bruntisfield.

Please see the latest issue of Drumbeat (the Order's Newsletter from Africa) for a fuller account of the work that is going on at the Lamu Hospital.

Comcompanions.com

I have been in discussion with a number of interested Companions with regard to this initiative, which for want of a better epithet might be described as 'adopt a resident'. I am looking at the options for the CoM to establish a companions network whereby, whether through social media or more traditional means, all those who would wish and can't always make visits can nonetheless establish contact and befriend a Care Home resident or other elderly, infirm or less able person.

I have still to establish a working party on this to develop the model. I think we need to put together a group with computer skills and personnel from the Care Homes. If you would like to get involved in this contact me (pletman@3harecourt.com or hletman@aol.com).

KEY DATES

26 May 2012	St. Wilfrid's OSJCT Jubilee Tea Party (contact Jamie, South East)
09 June 2012	Garden Opening, thanks to Susan MacGregor (contact Liam, Scotland)
09 June 2012	Newman Pilgrimage (contact Adrian, Birmingham)
22 June 2012	St. John's Day Celebrations (information to be circulated by Lalla)
01 July 2012	Scalan Seminary Celebration (contact Gordon, E Scotland)

09-13 July 2012 Summer Holiday Camp at the Calvert Trust (contact Duncan, SW)

Every Tuesday Evening at St. Patrick's Soho Square (contact Peter, London)

Website

To find this Newsletter and keep in touch with the activities of the CoM online please go to www.basmom-hospitaller.org and click on Companions. (I am conscious though that there are currently some problems with the website e.g malware on the site; I am working on sorting these out and establishing separate pages for the regions and Scotland that can be edited by our area coordinators.) You can also join (closed) Facebook groups in London and Scotland.

Yours as ever,

Paul Letman
CHAIR CoM

Postscript: Thank you to Mary Carter and all those who have read this far....