

YOUTH Matters

Issue 3 Spring 2005 Produced by the Croydon Deanery Youth Project

SIDE BY SIDE

In their document, 'Renewing the Vision, A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry,' the USA Conference of Catholic Bishops state, Parishes are places, 'where the gospel is proclaimed and celebrated, where believers are formed and sent to renew the earth... Parishes should be a place where young people are welcomed, grow in Jesus Christ, and minister side by side with adults of the community...' 'In parishes, young people should feel a sense of belonging and acceptance as full-fledged members of the community.' 'Young people 'bring to the parish community youthfulness, energy, vitality, hopefulness, and vision' (p.12 - 13).

In the light of this statement, and our own Diocesan Confirmation policy, do parish communities have a plan to involve each young person in ministry and mission as part of the Confirmation process?

In their preparation for Confirmation Young people are often told that the Sacrament makes them adult members of the Church. However, the reality may not measure up to the words. Young people may not experience working alongside adults in ministry or parish groups before, during or after their preparation for Confirmation. Indeed follow up, where it happens can be simply social and perhaps condescending.

'Service projects' are a way of involving young people. In one parish the young people became involved in service projects prior to their catechesis and this is continuing throughout their preparation for confirmation. Here are some comments:

'After completing these tasks for the church I felt like I belonged to the community.' Liam from the Family Mass group.

'Being in the music ministry has made us feel part of a strong community.' Beth and Marney.

'Its helped me to be more involved ...' Jay from the art and liturgy group.

'I...also helped the children with their communion booklets, the programme has also been very helpful to me as while talking and discussing with the children I was refreshing my memory about my faith.' Elisa first communion helper.

'I feel serving is a good way to give back to the church after the church and parish have given me so much in my life.' Rachael, altar server.

The projects also include Justice and Peace, the SVP and sports group.

Croydon deanery is planning a youth ministry training day which will take place at the CEC on Saturday 21st May. Information will go out shortly and bookings are welcomed from all those working with young people or those recommended by their parish priest.

If you are interested in taking part in the training day mentioned above and you have the support of your parish priest, contact me at the address at the head of this newsletter.

Tom Caluori

Contact Tom Caluori at
St. Joseph's College Beulah Hill
London SE19 3HL
Tel: 0777 5592984
tomcaluori@blueyonder.co.uk

DEANERY YOUTH MASS

Our fourth deanery youth Mass will take place in Purley on Sunday 6th March at the 6.30pm Mass followed by refreshments. This will also be a thanksgiving Mass for those recently Confirmed at St. John the Baptist. The Confirmation group will be spearheading the preparation but they would welcome young people from other parishes who would like to give a hand. There will be a workshop in the parish hall at 3 pm on Saturday the 5th March. The last youth Mass at Upper Norwood was a lovely celebration. Any interested young people may contact the Croydon Deanery Youth Project Office.

Born For This

'A powerful and moving portrayal of the Stations of the Cross featuring the orchestral score by Boyce and Stanley.'

**At: St. George's Cathedral,
Southwark**

On: Sunday 6th March.

At: 7.30pm

Cost: £6.00

Tickets: 01675 466 254 or by post - cheque and SAE to

CJM Music, Don Bosco House, Coventry Road, Coleshill, West Midlands, B46 3EA. (Payable to CJM Music LTD.)

Any young people interested in joining the production contact CJM Music on 01675 466254.



LIFE's work with Croydon students

Since September of last year I have been working as LIFE PR/Education Officer for Surrey. Based in Croydon, I have visited many schools in the area and spoken to teenagers about issues as diverse as reproductive technologies and sexually transmitted infections.

LIFE Education contradicts government policy which has continued to promote widespread abortion, human cloning and value-less sex education. We feel that choosing to disrespect life and the act of life-giving has created an unhappy culture of violence and pornography.

Teenagers in Surrey agree with us.

The feedback we received from recent whole-day conferences we have run in Virgo Fidelis, Norwood and St Philomena's, Carshalton, is pleasing and typical: "it has helped me be well equipped and ready to watch out for what makes a good relationship." "This was the most interesting and full of knowledge RS day we have ever had." "I'm proud to be a virgin." We do not employ powers of hypnotism to get such confident reactions. The girls who heard our presentations and took part in our discussion groups came to their own conclusions. It is the students themselves who know, deep within, that the messages they are being sent by the media and our own government are failing to respect their dignity.

Young people know that sympathy with one's vulnerable and tragic situation necessitates pro-active caring and compassionate assistance. They recognise that the work of our charity in counselling, housing and supporting women is the loving response to unplanned pregnancy. Young people know that life

begins at the beginning (fertilisation). Thus they appreciate the work of our ethical and successful fertility programme and reject the eugenic abuse of embryos (IVF).

LIFE is the charity providing the positive alternative to the culture of death in every situation through our housing, hospices for babies and health centres. In LIFE Education we are also actively answering the call of our Holy Father.

Pope John Paul II has made cherishing life the focus of his papacy. All Catholics, in the Western world in particular, are called to direct humankind towards a culture of life; respecting the rights of the most vulnerable: the unwanted and the unseen. It is the young who are rising to this challenge: our student membership database is crammed. Teenagers recognise the truth amid the clamour of political correctness and popular pressure. They do not shy away from topics deemed too controversial and taboo.

LIFE Education assists the young in confronting ethical issues in a mature fashion. If the next generation are to be the salt and light of the world they depend upon our work. The lucid, intellectual and thought-provoking service provided by LIFE is second to none. It needs your support. Please assist us in any way you can (www.lifeuk.org). Contact me if you would like us to visit your school. Most importantly, please pray that our work will continue to flourish, so that we can return the world to its creator, Jesus Christ; the source of life in all its fullness.

Matthew O'Gorman LIFE
PR/Education Officer (Surrey) Tel: 020 8686 9292, e-mail: life_surreyandcroydon@yahoo.co.uk /



St. Joseph's College year 8 retreat to St. Vincent's centre Whitstable

Considering a Gap Year?

Then why not consider St. Vincents?

St. Vincent's is the residential youth centre of the Southwark Diocesan Catholic Youth Service and is situated at Whitstable (5 minutes from the sea) in Kent - only a couple of hours from London. The centre has recently been refurbished and is now a very sought after place for parish and school groups. Join a team of young people to lead these retreats. The young people who go there have a great time and find it a very worthwhile experience. Recently groups have gone from a school in Croydon deanery and those who went all want to go again! As a member of the team you get free board and pocket money and a challenging and rewarding experience. Why not give them a call? St. Vincent's Centre, Castle Road, Whitstable, Kent, CT5 2ED. Tel 01227 272900 Text for 'Youth Matters ':

ST GERTRUDE'S YOUNG MINDS

The group continues to meet every Sunday evening in the presbytery from 7.30 to 9.00pm. At the beginning of the new year we drew up a 'menu' of activities, with different discussion topics following the Impact 'see, judge, act' model. We have an informal pizza evening once a month for a relaxed get-together.

On 16th January the group took part in the 10 am Mass, preparing the introduction to the mass, reading the scripture readings, preparing the bidding prayers and offering a post-communion reflection. It all went very well.

On 12th March we're having a trip to London - a 'flight' on the London Eye and a meal in Chinatown.

New members always welcome!

Youth ministry training day

A day for youth ministry training will take place on Saturday 21st May this year at the Christian Education Centre, Tooting. The purpose of the day will be to explore ways to develop parish youth ministry. The day will be especially useful for those parishes that wish to develop teams and coordinators for parish youth ministry. This seems to be diocesan policy and the appointment of Karen North currently at the CEC as training and development worker for the diocesan youth service is a sure step in this direction. Such a development is very much in line with the proposals in the USA Bishops Conference document, 'Renewing the Vision,' referred to in the lead article of this newsletter. Information about the training day which is intended for those working with young people as catechists and other forms of ministry to young people or those recommended by their parish priest, will go out shortly. In the meantime anyone who is interested in taking part in the day and who has the support of their PP should contact the Croydon Deanery Youth Project office given in this newsletter. Places will be limited.

Youth 2000

There were eight young people present. The Church was quiet. Soon the Blessed Sacrament was exposed. During the following hour, there were two praise hymns sung gently but with conviction. There was some spontaneous prayer said with reverence. A rosary was said - the mysteries of light. This was very reflective and thoughtful. Later there was a short scripture reading followed by a reflection read aloud. Soon the peaceful time was over and the young people moved off for a cup of tea in the parish room.

If you would like to join this special gathering which takes place each Tuesday at 7.30 in St. Mary's church, West Croydon I'm sure you would be very welcome.

For more details ring Anna on 07765 121758

Tom Caluori

World Youth Day

Those thinking about booking for World Youth Day, which will be a holiday with a difference, should decide soon. There is pressure on the Southwark Catholic Youth Service to finalise accommodation and travel arrangements immediately. So far, St Dominic's Waddon, St. Chad's, South Norwood, (who are working through the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts and have 16 booked) and Good shepherd, New Addington have been parishes where great interest has been shown. The dates for the diocesan trip have been changed to 15th - 26th August this year. Booking forms are available for the diocesan trip from the Croydon deanery youth Project Office. Why not come along?



XX
World Youth Day
Cologne 2005

Upper Norwood IMPACT Move On

The YCW IMPACT group at Upper Norwood which grew out of the last Confirmation group in the parish in 2003 has now become a Section of the Young Christian Workers. The YCW is mainly for young people of school leaving age and therefore focuses on issues and everyday situations, which affect older young people. The group, about 14 in number, are ready

for this transition. They have their own committee and lead their own enquiries. Importantly the group, comprising young people from a variety of schools across school age year 11 and year 12 have become the best of friends and enjoy their weekly meetings on a Friday when there is less pressure from Homework.

For more information about YCW contact the CDYP office, address at the start of this newsletter.



LENT

During Lent we remember the sacrifice that Christ made for us and try in some small way to make our own way of the Cross. It helps us to focus on the path our Lord took and prepare for Easter. We can then understand the journey Jesus made and rejoice in His resurrection.

So what are you doing for Lent? Giving up something or taking up something? More important, why?

Drink water instead of that can of fizzy drink. Not so nice, but the money saved can be put in the charity box.

Smile at someone it could make their day.

LOVE makes our friends a little dearer

JOY makes our hearts a little lighter

FAITH makes our paths a little clearer

HOPE makes our lives a little brighter

PEACE brings us all a little nearer

From Green Bough