

## FOUNDATION WELFARE OFFICERS ANNUAL REPORT 2023 for



### **NAME OF FOUNDATION:**

**Our Lady of Good Counsel UCM Hythe, Kent**

### **UCM Welfare work undertaken this year in your foundation:**

#### **1/ Support for each other has included**

- Lifts to/from meetings and Mass
- Regular /weekly visits to members who are housebound
- UCM members who are Eucharistic ministers regularly take the Sacrament to housebound members and other parishioners.
- UCM group pilgrimage to Aylesford Priory
- UCM member organised annual Parish pilgrimage to Clare Priory in Suffolk to the shrine of Our Lady of Good Counsel.  
**UCM members attended 21 Oct UCM Rally Mass at St. George's.**
- Note regarding UCM pilgrimage to Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham: Every year several members keen to go - but timings, distance & cost usually make it prohibitive. However, some members plan to attend the Diocesan Pilgrimage 2024.

#### **2/ UCM members are involved in following:**

- Eucharistic Ministers
- Readers for Mass
- Choir Members
- Prepare the Children's Liturgy to encourage greater participation of the children in the Children's Mass on Sundays
- Catechesis: Members are part of the team for the children's formation for Sacramental preparation before receiving the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist.  
**UCM members provided breakfast in the church hall after Mass for First Holy Communion children.**
- Members are Registrars for Weddings that take place in OLoGC
- By leading Eucharistic Services, in the absence of a priest
- Leading 'The Stations of the Cross' during Lent
- Organising young families to light the Advent Candles on the 5 Sundays of Advent/Christmas
- UCM Volunteers go regularly to St Augustine's our local Catholic Primary School to assist with the Reading Programme (guiding young readers) of the school.
- Church cleaning
- Organising and arranging flowers in church
- Digital donation box at Sunday Mass
- Editing, publishing and distribution of weekly Parish bulletin

#### **3/ UCM members run monthly meetings open to all parishioners**

- Bereavement group
- HCPT Prayer group, praying for HCPT and the needs of people of all ages with special needs in the Parish & beyond

- UCM monthly coffee morning for Parish after Sunday Mass, often including homemade cakes.
- The work of the educational and lobbying arm of SPUC in the Parish is driven, highlighted and actioned in the parish thanks to a strong team, who are also active UCM Members.

**4/ UCM members have supported events in Hythe**  
 e.g, Women Ukrainian refugees in fund-raising activities for Ukraine.  
 e.g. World Kindness Day, organised at the Town Hall.

**5/ UCM members helped organise and supported the World Day of Prayer in Hythe.**  
 This is one of the many services shared and organised by 'The Churches Together in Hythe and Saltwood' & Christian Denominations working together.

**Also, in the 'Procession of Witness through the town on Good Friday and this year for the first time a live tableau in the centre of town – to witness 'The Nativity Story of Our Lord, Jesus Christ'.**

**A number of members work actively with the other denominations through 'The Churches Together Ministry'.**

**6/ UCM members are involved in voluntary work for the Rainbow Centre (part of the Trussell Trust) in Folkestone – e.g. in breakfast club and administration of the Rainbow Centre charity shop. UCM members and parishioners provided hot main meals for 15 adults on three Monday evenings in December 2023 at the Winter Shelter.**

**UCM members are part of the Local Hythe Pantry, managed by the Rainbow Centre Folkestone and supported by Churches Together in Hythe and local supermarkets. Set up in November 2022, 'The Hythe Pantry' is operated from a lockable room in our Church Hall - the use of which has been given by Our Lady of Good Counsel to enable access to food (through the charity), a warm space and refreshments, provided by our members.**

**UCM members**

- Help with serving or meeting and greeting in the Pantry
- Serve tea and coffee from our Hall kitchen to Pantry customers - friendly faces and listening ears where needed.

**Some of our UCM members suggested having a Parish/Pantry Clothes Rail in the church hall to be run alongside the Pantry by UCM/church members. The Pantry Clothes Rail has evolved from 1 rail of coats and jumpers for women and children into a more extensive range on 6 rails and tables of clothes for men, women and children. Small donations may be made for items by Pantry customers or frequently a 'bring and swap' children's clothes, by the mothers. Excess clothes have been sent to charity shops in Hythe and of the Rainbow Trust Folkestone.**

**Towards the end of 2023, it was decided to open up access to the Parish/Pantry Clothes Rail to families in need in the wider Hythe, Folkestone and Romney Marsh area. Consequently, a UCM member contacted 25 Primary Schools to notify them of this so that they could let families in their schools know of this facility. Clothes are available on the same basis as they are to the Hythe Pantry customers.**

**UCM Members have also established a 'Turnaround Uniform Shop' – working with St Augustine's Primary School to provide school uniforms to assist those parents**

and pupils who benefit from the facility; working with the 'eco-team' from the school.

UCM members are supporting Refugees by donating Men's trousers/clothes and shoes for Refugees, accommodated locally.

7/ UCM members host a number of coffee mornings after Sunday Morning Mass which raise funds for charities ~ thereby, highlighting the presence and work of the UCM in the parish:

Charities with which many of our UCM Members are involved:

- HCPT – Hosanna House & Children's Pilgrimage Trust
- SPUC – Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child
- Transform Trade (the rebranded name of Traidcraft Exchange)
- The Local Hythe Pantry
- JTJ Filipino Trust (set up by Fr Jim Teeling our Parish Priest with others). Objectives to assist in the relief of, and provide a place of education for, marginalised children in a deprived area in the Philippines; particularly relating to their education, physical, mental and spiritual development.

[JTJ Filipino Trust Fund - About](#)

8/ May 2023, UCM held a Coronation Garden Party Picnic Lunch and children's entertainment for families using the Hythe Local Pantry.

9/ In June 2023, UCM members helped organise a weekend Artisan Craft Fair 'to help the economically weak across three continents'. The event raised just over £2,200 split equally between three charities: CAFOD for the Syrian earthquake victims; Hythe Local Pantry; and the JTJ Filipino Trust.

10/ UCM members formed one of the teams in an afternoon's sponsored knitting competition for knitters across the Hythe and Folkestone area to raise funds for the Rainbow Centre. Hythe UCM team raised £600 toward a total of over £5,000 including Gift Aid.

11/ At the end of November 2023, UCM members helped organise a Christmas Market. Money raised was given to our Parish/School Community Garden project.

12/ This year, as in previous years, UCM Members have hosted the Deanery Clergy Lunch.

13/ Hythe UCM have actively given funds to the "NH &RH Charity" (National Homes & Rest Homes), a dedicated charity of the UCM.

2<sup>nd</sup> February 2024

UCM Foundation Welfare Officer, Our Lady of Good Counsel, Hythe, Kent