

FOUNDATION WELFARE OFFICERS ANNUAL REPORT 2024 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 or in Care Centres
- 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 pilgrimage 1st and 2nd July to Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham
- UCM members attended 19th Oct UCM Rally Mass at St. George's, Cathedral where one of our members was presented with a beautiful certificate to celebrate 60 years in the UCM.
- Diocesan Study Day which helped us understand some of the key messages of Fratelli Tutti.
- The visit by Sharon Bishop and Mary Piper to one of our First Friday UCM meetings was greatly appreciated.
- Guest speakers at our UCM meetings included:
 - Majella Turner, Diocesan Welfare Officer
 - Mary Stredwick, CEO of The Rainbow Centre
 - Deacon Gehad Homsey Egypt in 2024
 - Brian Murphy Prostate Cancer Awareness open to all parishioners
 - Ada Foreman, our UCM Hythe chair - Mombasa's Women's Centre
- Organising the St Patrick's Quiz
- UCM Annual Dinner at Sotirios Restaurant in Folkestone
- Lunch after a UCM meeting at Brookes Tea Room, Hythe
- December meeting Social – Secret Santa, Mince Pies and Mulled Wine

2/ UCM members were involved in the following:

- Eucharistic Ministers
- Readers for Mass
- Choir Members
- Children's Liturgy to encourage greater participation of the children in the Children's Mass on Sundays
- Catechesis: UCM Members were 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 Authorised Persons to act for the Registrar conducting Marriages at Our Lady of Good Counsel church.**
- **Leading Eucharistic Services, in the absence of a priest or deacon**
- **Leading 'The Stations of the Cross' during Lent**
- **Organising young families to light the Advent Candles on the 4 Sundays of Advent/Christmas**
- **UCM Volunteers went regularly to St Augustine's our local Catholic Primary School to assist with the Reading Programme (guiding young readers) of the school. Also took two 'HCPT' assemblies to talk about disabled or disadvantaged children who go with Hosanna House Children's Pilgrimage Trust to Lourdes Easter 2024. The school raised money for HCPT as part of their Lenten activities.**
- **Church cleaning**
- **Digital donation box at Sunday Mass**
- **Editing, publishing and distribution of weekly Parish bulletin.**

3/ UCM members ran 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 mornings for the Parish after Sunday Mass, often including homemade cakes.**
- **The work of the educational and lobbying arm of SPUC in the Parish was 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. Ukrainian women 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 and Dymchurch. This is one of the many services shared and organised by 'The Churches Together in Hythe and Saltwood & Christian Denominations working together.

UCM members participated 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'. Attended Songs of Praise service in Hythe.

6/ UCM members are involved in voluntary work for the Rainbow Centre (part of the Trussell Trust) in Folkestone – e.g. in the Breakfast Club and administration of the Rainbow Centre charity shop. UCM members and parishioners contributed funds and provided hot main meals for 15 adults on

three Monday evenings early in 2024 and in December 2024 at the Winter Shelter.

UCM members volunteered at the Hythe Parish/Pantry. This collaborative operation between Our Lady of Good Counsel, Hythe and The Rainbow Centre in Folkestone runs on two days every week. It is supported by Churches Together in Hythe and local supermarkets. Now in its second year, 'The Hythe Parish 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

- Helped with serving or meeting and greeting in the Pantry
- Served tea and coffee from our Hall kitchen to Pantry customers - friendly faces and listening ears where needed.
- UCM with other Parish members – all volunteers - helped run a Parish/Pantry Clothes Rail in the church hall alongside the Pantry. Excess clothes have been sent to charity shops in Hythe, in New Romney and to the Rainbow Trust shop in Folkestone. Some are also sent to Operation Sunshine delivering clothes to Zambia.
- UCM Members have helped with the '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. Non-badged school uniform also available to parents of other schools in the area.
- UCM members help support Refugees/Asylum seekers accommodated locally by donating Men's clothes and shoes, also suitcases.

7/ UCM members hosted 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 in which 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/ July 2024, UCM members were among those who organised and provided a Parish Lunch at the Garden Party Farewell to our Priest, Fr James Teeling who has taken active retirement. UCM organised and presented Fr Jim with

a Farewell Book of Messages from Parishioners and photos of Parish events - thanking him for all his kindness to us and for all he had done to build up our Parish Community including establishing the Hythe Parish/Pantry Hub and wishing him a very happy 'active retirement'.

9/ UCM members again 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 contributed £480.50 to the total raised of £4,809.30p.

10/ This year, as in previous years, UCM Members hosted one of the regular Deanery Clergy Lunches.

11/ On Friday 6th December 2024, Hythe UCM hosted refreshments in the Church Hall for 125 children from St Augustine's school after our celebration together of Mass in Our Lady of Good Counsel church.

12/ Friday 20th December 2024, on the Induction by Bishop Paul Hendricks of Fr Peter Iwuoha CM, our new Parish Priest at Our Lady of Good Counsel church, the UCM organised refreshments for Guests and Parishioners afterwards in the Church Hall.

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

Any concerns/issue:
None

PLEASE RETURN YOUR REPORT TO YOUR DIOCESAN WELFARE OFFICER BY DEC 31st

Signed: *Marion Howard-Healy* 21st December 2024

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(Foundation Welfare Officer)

