

Spiritual Directors Report - Reverend Mandy Rhodes
Leeds Anglican Cursillo Spiritual Director's report March 2018

It feels strange to be writing what will be my final SD Report for the Secretariat as my sabbatical begins in April and Canon Tony Macpherson will be taking over the reins as Diocesan SD in my absence, with ratification of his position at the AGM.

With the inauguration of, initially WYAD Cursillo which became Leeds Anglican Cursillo, I agreed to take on the role of Diocesan SD for a year, with Revd Bev Mason waiting in the wings, as it were, to take over after me. As we now know, Bev became Archdeacon of Richmond, so I agreed, in the absence of any other succession plan, to continue in the role until a year after Lynette Barnes ended her term as Lay Director last year, thus ensuring some continuity on the Secretariat. During my tenure, I have been privileged to see Leeds Anglican Cursillo become recognised amongst the senior staff as a well-respected discipleship method and, as recently as yesterday, John Speller, Tony MacPherson and I met with the Diocesan Director of Lay Training, Hayley Matthews, to discuss plans to promote Cursillo further within Diocesan circles, including more prominence within the Lay Training part of the Diocesan website.

When we made the transition to WYAD then Leeds Cursillo back in 2014, it was always my intention that the clergy with oversight operate in the same pattern as senior staff across the diocese and, to that end, I appointed EA Chaplains to assist me in my role as Diocesan SD. There have been quite a few changes to EA personnel over the past 4 years, which initially concerned me somewhat, but, as I leave the SD role, I suspect that it will ever be thus, because of the nature of demands on clergy and also changes in their deployment. At present, Huddersfield EA is without a Chaplain and whilst the servant community there are doing a sterling job, it does concern me that they have no 'official' clergy support. Bradford are shortly, through retirement, to say goodbye to Marion Gaskell, who has served Cursillo across the whole County of Yorkshire for many years and was on the transition team back in 2014. My huge thanks go to Marion who has been a steadying influence and a 'rock' for many Cursillistas during this time, not least for me! I am delighted to announce that Revd Mary Fisher will take over the reins after Marion retires next week. I will remain as EA Chaplain for Leeds (unless Canon Tony decides otherwise!).

As I step down from this position, there is the chance for me to give 'official' and heartfelt thanks to all those individuals who have helped make this somewhat unexpected role a joy and source of encouragement. I am always reluctant to begin naming names because there's a risk that someone, inevitably, gets missed out; but, with apologies to those I may forget to name, I cannot step back without recognising the huge contribution and friendships of Lay Directors, Lynette Barnes and John Speller and the support of clergy colleagues who guided me into this role (and didn't run away afterwards!), Wilf Gowing and John Holmes. I have been blessed to work with some of the most dedicated and faith-filled Secretariat members and Weekend Teams over the years and I hope that all members of Leeds Anglican Cursillo discern and appreciate just how hard-working they all are...for Christ and for Cursillistas.

I know that under the expert guiding hand of Tony Mac, Leeds Anglican Cursillo will go from strength to strength and, it is my hope that we will soon be in a position to have Happening gifted to us from Blackburn Diocese, in order to compliment what we already offer to adult pilgrims the length and breadth of this Diocese.

I wish you all well and offer you my prayers and a farewell (as SD at least!) Ultreya!

Revd Mandy