

Meet The Team

As you can imagine the School does not run itself and there are many people involved in many ways but we thought that you would like to meet some of the key players on our team:



Geoff & Gina

In full time Christian ministry as Directors of the Catholic Bible School. They have overall responsibility for all aspects of the School including some of the teaching and course design and live over the school so really are 24/7!



Melinda

Personal Assistant and Secretary to Directors as well as being the in-house graphic designer and course secretary.



Marge

Is responsible for the housekeeping at the School ensuring that it is always clean and tidy and looking at its best, ready for each course as the participants arrive.



John

As well as being Deputy Chair of our Trustees he takes responsibility for keeping the grounds of the School looking at their best – he is not bad with a paintbrush either!



Amanda

Our bookkeeper who manages our financial records and gift aid so that we receive all that is due to us.



Ros

Our SOS Prayerline does not just happen, it requires ongoing management to ensure that it is staffed every night of the year and Ros takes responsibility for this important ministry.

Not included above is Olive who is responsible for catering when needed and also invaluable in house and dog sitting, thus releasing our Directors when they are called to teach away from the School, and our Trustees who have responsibility for the governance of the School:

*Fr Michael Gwinnell [Chair]
John Hutchings [Deputy Chair]
Clare Apel, Peter Hutley
Charles Whitehead, Fr Frank O'Sullivan
& Michael Heathcote [Hon Treasurer].*

Learn More About the Scriptures



We often receive calls from people or groups seeking a basic course on the Bible and we are now pleased to be able to respond to these requests with this new CD based six session course – 'Learn More About the Scriptures'. It is ideal for use by parish groups, families or individuals.

Everything that is needed is supplied in the pack. There are six CDs [one for each session] containing music, an opening prayer and talk/teaching. Then there is a pause for a light-hearted quiz on what has been heard during the talk followed by a closing prayer and accompanying music. There are two further CDs, one has downloadable notes of the talk, the quiz questions, and answers of course! Plus a bonus CD of the music used in the course. In addition there is a Leaders Manual to help those facilitating the programme. No prior knowledge is required to run this programme and with refreshments each session lasts no longer than 90 minutes.

All of this for a bargain price of £28.99 plus postage and packing. The key areas covered by the programme are: Finding your way around the Bible; What does the Catholic Church teach about the Bible?; Sacred Scripture, its inspiration and interpretation; Understanding the Old Testament; Understanding the New Testament; Sacred Scripture in the life of the Church.

The easiest way to buy this is to use our online shop at; www.catholic-bible-school.org or alternatively phone or write to the address on the back page of this newsletter.

Written and narrated by Brian Devine, who, with his wife Maureen, were previously members of the Basildon Ministry Team. Both Brian and Maureen have BA's and MA's in theology from Catholic institutions – this is truly a programme produced by Catholics with Catholics in mind – add to this the fact that it is a UK product it is a unique resource for the Church.

Gideon's Army

We are seeking 300 people who will commit to making a regular monthly donation by bankers order for £5, £10, £15, £20 or any other amount. There are already 150 who have signed up with many of them Gift Aiding their donations. This is invaluable to the work of the Catholic Bible School.

In return we undertake to pray for members of Gideon's Army every time Mass is celebrated at the School. Also, our co-workers pray for these donors and their intentions every evening before the Blessed Sacrament.

If the vision of the Catholic Bible School touches your spirit and you want to help in this way then either phone us on 01243 371766 or email: info@catholic-bible-school.org and ask for an information pack to be sent to you.

SOS PRAYERLINE

Every evening [365 days of the year] from 7.30pm until midnight co-workers are in constant adoration before the Blessed Sacrament and praying with all who phone in. There is no discussion, no counselling or questions just a listening ear and someone wanting to pray.

As this newsletter goes to press we are about to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the Prayerline during which time there have been in excess of 106,000 calls received.

This is one of our key ministries and is overseen by Ros Davies. We are always seeking new co-workers for this work, so please keep this intention in your prayers.

Contact details for the SOS Prayerline are :01243 377331.

SOUTHAMPTON CELEBRATE FAMILY CONFERENCE 8-10 October 2010

If you are within travelling distance or fancy a great weekend away why not find out more about this. There will be praise, worship, talks, seminars and workshops with full programmes for children of all ages and young adults.

Phone Peter and Lynda on: 0203 292058 for full information

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REFLECTION

Since we wrote the lead article in last year's 'REFLECTION' it is probably a fair assumption to make that for almost everyone the past twelve months has produced times of concern, surprise and worry. Without a doubt this has been a year of uncertainty and change in so many areas of our lives as we live through these challenging economic and political times.



As we reflected on this we thought of a number of analogies for life's journey and we came up with life being like a jigsaw puzzle. All the pieces are there but the box lid with the picture of the finished puzzle is damaged or missing so the challenge is even greater. With a jigsaw puzzle the established way to start, we recall from many years ago, or perhaps more recently when helping grandchildren, is to find the four corner pieces and then the edge pieces so that the outline can be completed. Perhaps this is where the analogy breaks down - life's jigsaw is not like that, it is much more random.

It occurred to us that in life's jigsaw the secret is to start at the centre and work outwards adding pieces as you go. In a real jigsaw finding the central piece is well nigh impossible but for life's puzzle it is obvious. Jesus and our relationship with our living Lord is the centre, the key, the cornerstone. If we can get that in place we have a firm foundation to build on. If we are rooted in Jesus then we can face the storms of life. We can become more able to hold fast in times of difficulty by keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus our Saviour and living on the word of God found in Scripture.

The aim of the Catholic Bible School is to be a source from which people can be resourced, refreshed and encouraged to come into that place of personal relationship with Jesus - the centre piece of the puzzle of life.

We hope that this short newsletter will provide you with a picture of how we have sought to do this over the past year and what we hope to do during 2010 either at the School or through our distance learning resources.

Thank you for your ongoing support and encouragement.

Yours in His love and peace

Geoff and Gina Poulter

Directors



Looking Back - 2009

One of the great joys in reflecting on what has transpired in the year just gone is being able to recognise how in so very many ways the Lord has had his hand on things and how he has provided in such abundant generosity.

It has been a busy year once again with the School facilities heavily utilised by our own programmes and courses as well as outside organisations and groups using us as a conference or meeting venue.

Sadly our year-long course 'Bible Breakthrough', which we piloted to a full house in 2008 had to be cancelled in 2009 because of lack of interest. However, we are pleased to be able to report that all the other courses went ahead as planned and were well attended. Worthy of a special mention was a new six-session course held in the evenings called 'You, Me and the Gospel'. This was spread over 12 weeks and was not only well attended but resulted in very positive feedback from those attending, and some powerful testimonies as to how significant

the course had been in people's spiritual journey.

Our Saturday Study Days remain very popular and are attracting increasing numbers. This year we introduced five new speakers into the programme and all of them were very well received and this was not surprising as they led first class study days. Finding speakers has never been a problem and if we are honest the challenge is how to rotate them within a two-year timescale to keep the programme balanced and varied. So 2010 looks equally exciting! It is worth keeping your eye on our website as often we take the opportunity when presented to us to include additional events, especially if an exceptional speaker suddenly becomes available.

There is always something happening here on a Wednesday evening. The second, fourth and fifth evenings is our Open Door Prayer Group and as the name suggests it is open to all.

On the first Wednesday of the month we have Holy Hour [Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament] which really is a time of peace and intimacy with Our Lord. On the third Wednesday we have a service 'Healing and Wholeness'. Numbers for both of these are increasing and in particular the healing service where we have witnessed the power of the Holy Spirit moving in a sovereign way in recent months bringing healing and wholeness.

Our annual Garden Party and Open day was held in June, as usual, and once again we were very blessed by a lovely summer day. Why not try and get here for the 2010 event? We would love you to meet more of our supporters. There are so many people who help in so many different ways that it is impossible to name them all but you know who you are and we say a BIG THANK YOU to you, for without you the work at the school would be depleted. We have included some of the key people on the back page in our 'Meet the Team' section.



Katolsk Bjelaskole

The last weekend in October saw Geoff and Gina flying back to Hellig Kors Kloster a retreat and conference venue miles from anywhere on the west coast of Jutland close to a large inland sea at the invitation of Fr Benny Blumensaat and Maria Truelson the conference co-ordinators and sponsors. The weekend conference was on 'The Beatitudes'.

The conference centre was full so some extra participants had to travel daily. It is so encouraging to see numbers continuing to grow with more and more people hungry for teaching and spiritual growth. It was humbling to find that some delegates had travelled for over five hours to get to the conference and a great joy to work with Christians from across the denominations.



[This course material will be used as a basis for a new six evening course called 'Walking Back To Happiness' at the Catholic Bible School in the Spring of 2010 – see our programme for full details - and is on offer to Parishes or Groups, contact: info@catholic-bible-sd.school.org for more details.]

Discussions are underway for a further conference in 2010.

New Look

For sometime we have felt prompted to consider the branding and Image of the Catholic Bible School. Since its formation the School has used a logo of a building and open bible which many of you will be familiar with. This was, in fact, derived from a prophetic collage made many years ago – hence our reluctance to change for change's sake.

Gradually it felt more and more right to review this and we are coming to the end of this process. The mandate given to our designer was to create a logo, a graphic icon, that expresses our strap line of "The Living Word- a living experience". The result is our new logo which will be gradually used in all our printed, recorded and internet based material.

As you will see it is an open bible with the cross emerging from it but with tongues of fire or waves of living water [depending on your imagination – there is no right answer]. We hope that you will like it and that before too long the image will become synonymous with the Catholic Bible School.

Alongside of the new logo, we have had our website re-designed and refreshed and this already incorporates our new logo and reflects our new image. Another step forward for us is that the website now has our new 'online shop' where CBS produced material can be purchased.



Finances

How good it is to serve a God who provides for His work. Once again the end of our financial year in March showed that our income had exceeded our expenditure and we were in surplus. We are delighted to report that this trend has continued up to the present time.

Numbers coming to the Catholic Bible School continue to grow gradually, which is an important factor to our income stream. Also we have been blessed by the fact that despite the difficult economic climate our benefactors, donors and members of Gideon's Army have continued to support the School – thank you all so very much. Without you we would not be able to continue to serve through the works and ministry of the Catholic Bible School.

For our part we continue to control costs tightly and are always vigilant in how we manage our outgoings. In addition, we are very fortunate to have a highly efficient bookkeeper, Amanda Kings, who not only provides us with up to date management accounts within a few days of month end, but also ensures that our Gift Aid claims are always up to date. This is a significant element of our income for which we are always grateful.

Income from the sale of teaching CDs recorded and produced at the School and of our distance learning material has increased significantly in the last twelve months. Added to these, new courses are now available [as reported elsewhere in the newsletter] which we hope will help continue this trend. We now have an online shop at www.catholic-bible-school.org. This went live in November 2009 and this too, will, we pray, be a further stimulus to these sales.

Despite this positive report be assured that we are not complacent in this area and remain very grateful to those who support the School financially. **Thank you**



Looking Ahead - 2010

Even as we put this newsletter together, the courier has just delivered our 2010 Programmes from the printers and simply thumbing through it we are filled with anticipation at what the Lord will do during the coming year through the various Study Days and courses. There is, once again, a full 'a la carte' menu for people who want to draw closer to the Lord to participate in. Two new courses of six sessions are planned; one titled 'Walking Back To Happiness' which will look at the Beatitudes and the other later in the year titled 'Ten Out Of Ten' which will take a fresh view of the Ten Commandments. Both of these courses will use a variety of media including DVD footage.

Another exciting project that is already at initial planning stage is to produce our first DVD based programme which will be for use in small groups individually. The material is being written by Brian Devine [who was instrumental in developing the Learn More About The Scriptures course which is covered elsewhere in the newsletter] – the working title for the programme is: 'Made In

The Image and Likeness of God" with a subtitle of '...Go on – me a swan!'. Filming will take place in July and we hope that it will be available in late autumn.

With DVD technology in mind we may well test whether some of our Saturday Study Days could be filmed – so keep your eyes on our website for up to date information.

www.catholic-bible-school.org

New speakers to the School next year include Brian Devine [mentioned above] and Steve Murray a leading international Christian mime artist who is leading a day in March which will be very exciting [don't worry he will do any miming necessary!]. Alongside Brian and Steve we will be welcoming back some of the new speakers from last year and some who have supported us over the years. It looks like a very exciting year.

Although we have redesigned our website one feature that we have retained is the weekly reflection on the Gospel reading for

Bro Cassian Pappu RIP

A "chance" email sent to Geoff and Gina resulted in what they describe as a "marriage made in heaven".



The message was from Br Cassian Pappu, a De La Salle Brother based in Malaysia. Br Cassian, a catechist, was looking for material to support his Bible Study programme for small groups in Kuala Lumpur. When surfing the web he came across the Living Word distance learning material from the School. The Catholic Bible School donated the complete set of 10 modules of the Living Word material to Br Cassian.

The De La Salle order has established a new organisation, CBS Living Word, which has been registered with the Malaysian authorities. The new organisation, of which Br Cassian was appointed director, is affiliated to the Catholic Bible School and was granted a licence to distribute and copy the teaching material for Malaysia.

Sadly, Br Cassian passed away in late November 2009 and despite never having met in person, it is as if the School has lost a very dear friend. May he rest in peace.

the coming Sunday as this has proved very popular. We are indebted to Alive Publishing for allowing us to reproduce this from their publication called Bible Alive. If you like the Sunday reflection why not subscribe to Bible Alive and benefit from a daily reflection. www.alivepublishing.co.uk will get you in contact or phone 01782 745600.

So with praise and thanks to God we hope and pray that it will be another exciting and busy year which we hope that some of you reading this will be able to participate in. We greatly appreciate your ongoing prayer support for these different initiatives, and all that takes place here at the Catholic Bible School.



Contact us for a copy of our latest Programme

