

## Sisters of Jesus Way

Who, O Lord, could save themselves,  
their own soul could heal?  
Our shame was deeper than the sea;  
your grace is deeper still,  
yes, your grace is deeper still

*You alone can rescue,  
you alone can save.  
You alone can lift us from the grave.  
You came down to find us,  
led us out of death.  
To you alone belongs the highest praise.*

*Matt Redman & Jonas Myrin © 2009 Thankyou Music*



Easter Newsletter 2023

**T**he other day, a leaflet popped through our front door about the West Kirby RNLI lifeboat. Since 1966, our local lifeboat has been launched at least 894 times and has saved 225 lives. Just in the last two years there have been 55 launches, 61 people aided and 3 lives saved. It is easy to forget that, as well as tides, currents



and storms, there are quicksands out in the estuary and an overconfident shortcut to Hilbre can land someone in real trouble. What wonderful reassurance, then, that both lifeboat and lifeguards are near at hand! Easter, too, is all about rescue. Whether we have become bogged down in the quicksand of our 'self-sins', swept off course by the cross-currents of temptation, carried too far by the tide of social pressure, or simply overwhelmed by the sudden storms of life, there is good news: Jesus still saves, and He too is near at hand.

**W**e'd like to get you up to date with our arrangements for visitors at the moment. We are open to receive guests from a Thursday afternoon until a Tuesday morning – and therefore are closed on a Wednesday. Our maximum number of visitors overnight is nine (three twin rooms and three single, all with en suites). The small Kitchenette is now open again; we ask you to be sensitive to others when in communal areas because there are plenty of viruses about! Small day groups of up to ten people are possible and we're happy to provide lunch and to lead (speaking and worship) if required. We should perhaps mention here that our office is closed each week on a Wednesday and a Sunday, so there may be a delay before we get back to you.

You may have noticed that we have changed the timings of our mailings. Instead of Advent and Summer, this will be our Easter Newsletter and the second mailing of the year will be our Autumn Newsletter. We intend to continue with this new pattern.

As usual, we are enclosing a Celebration Leaflet. We are again offering a Lent Day in March as a preparation for Easter. You are also welcome to join us for one or more of our special Easter services in which we accompany the Lord Jesus on His journey from Gethsemane through to the empty tomb. We have included a Dance Day on 22<sup>nd</sup> April for those who would like to worship the Lord through movement. Then in May we have our Praise and Walking Weekend, when we explore our beautiful area and pause to sing praise to the Creator. At the end of May is our Pentecost Weekend, when we seek to honour the Holy Spirit. Our Quiet Day on 17<sup>th</sup> June provides an opportunity to pause in the midst of a busy life and draw close to the Lord. On July 1<sup>st</sup> we have included a Summer Barbecue when we invite you to come and enjoy being in our garden and to spend some time in praise and worship with us. Finally in our current programme, on September 22<sup>nd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> we have a weekend considering Our Faithful God – this will include Bible study and a service of Harvest Thanksgiving. For any of the items in this programme, please do book in with us beforehand as space is limited; this applies to day events as well as weekends and also applies to the Easter services.

**A**s we write this, we are in the process of upgrading our telephone system and broadband connection, as they were not adequate to cope with recent advances in telecommunications. We apologise if any of you have been unable to get through on the phone during this work, or if you have been unable to leave a message. Our lines and voicemail should now be functioning normally again. The work has also affected our Wi-Fi set-up; at the time of writing, Wi-Fi for visitors is only available in the part of the house nearest the Lounge. We hope to be able to extend coverage to most of the building in the coming months.

**T**here have been some changes in our community life. Together, guided by the Holy Spirit, we choose the different roles each Sister and Brother has, and this includes our leaders (Little Sister and Companion Sister). Sister Sylvia completed her term as our Little Sister at the end of August and passed the baton on to Sister Hazel, with Sister Louise as Companion Sister. This was marked by a quiet service of Holy Communion on the last day of the month, led by our vicar, Revd Nikki Eastwood. Sister Sylvia is of course still very much part of us and continues to share in our life and work here. On 19<sup>th</sup> November 2022 we then held a Commissioning Service in our Chapel, when Sister Hazel and Sister Louise were officially recognised as the new Little Sister and Companion Sister. This was led by our new Bishop Guardian, Bishop Mark, along with Revd Nikki. It was a very special service for us as a community entering a new phase of our life, affirming our calling to total dependency on God our Father, to Jesus as our first love, and to following the leading of the Holy Spirit.

**A** number of years ago now, we felt as a community that the Lord wanted us still to keep our own names, but to add to these a new name (see Isaiah 62:2 and Rev. 2:17). Each of us prayed about this and the Lord did give us each a new name. It was to be like a goal in our lives to live by or to grow towards. My name was to be Sister Hazel of the Lord of Grace. We only use these names in special community services. My new name was so appropriate because God wanted to rescue me from living my Christian life under law, to become a child of grace. Recently I came across the phrase 'in the grip of grace' in a book by Max Lucado, and I've found that helpful to hold onto and believe. Progress in this area has been very gradual and there is still a long way to go, but God promises to complete what He has started, with our co-operation. It is only possible through His amazing grace.

When I was lost You came and rescued me,  
Reached down into the pit and lifted me.  
O Lord, such love!  
I was as far from You as I could be.  
You know all the things I've ever done,  
But Jesus' blood has cancelled every one.  
O Lord, such grace to qualify me as Your own!

*There is a new song in my mouth,  
There is a deep cry in my heart,  
A hymn of praise to Almighty God – hallelujah!  
And now I stand firm on this Rock,  
My life is hidden now with Christ in God.  
The old has gone and the new has come,  
Hallelujah! Your love has lifted me,*

*Kate and Miles Simmonds © 2001 Thankyou Music*

With every blessing for Holy Week and Easter,

*The Sisters and Brother*



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