



DIOCESE OF LEICESTER

MAKING A DIFFERENCE



AWAY FROM IT ALL HOLIDAYS



Every year we send at least 10 families on a seaside holiday for 5 days. We have run this scheme for many years.

To be eligible, families should not have had a holiday together for at least three years.

Bereavement, trauma, family crisis or low-income meet the criteria and 'family' can include a supportive friend or relative if needed.

Families are referred by Mothers' Union members, clergy, teachers, social workers, health visitors and community workers – with the permission of the family.

Members help by raising funds for accommodation and transport. A starter pack of groceries is supplied from a 50p donation per member during the year. Suitcases and bathing costumes are provided where necessary.

We have also compiled a basic cookery book using the ingredients from their starter packs and all the children are given a teddy bear.

The families are supported during the week by an appointed MU team.



SUPPORTING THE HOMELESS

'Action Homeless' at Mayfield House, Leicester offers supported accommodation and resettlement services which enable people who are homeless rebuild their lives. There are 36 units and the occupants are given a planned programme of support on a temporary basis until a more permanent place is found. Any clean bedding, household items, adult clothing and toiletries are welcomed.

Women's toiletries, clothing, children's clothes etc. are also needed for women and children who are fleeing from domestic abuse and are now living in safe houses.

If possible please deliver these goods to: Mayfield House, 10 St James Terrace, Leicester LE2 1NA or bring them to Diocesan Council meetings.

If you can donate any furniture e.g. beds, chairs, ovens, fridges etc. the 'Open Hands Trust' will deliver it free to people who have little money. Contact them on 0116 2558672.



SUPPORTING ASYLUM SEEKERS

Mothers' Union supports the Welcome Project at the Church of the Martyrs, Westcotes Drive, Leicester, LE3 0QT. They meet every Tuesday afternoon between 1 - 3 pm. Their greatest need is for nappies size 5, baby food, sanitary wear and toiletries for women. Please bring to Diocesan Council meetings.

CRAFTS FOR HOSPITALS

Mothers' Union members knit beanie hats and jackets for premature babies. The jackets (raglan sleeves only) should **not** be lacy as tiny fingers can get caught - any size in white or pale shades. Also 18" square knitted cot blankets in white or pale shades. The patterns for these are in our Knitting Booklet.

These are given to the special care premature baby units at Leicester Royal Infirmary and Leicester General Hospital.

Shawls and any lacy knits are given to SANDS (stillbirth and neonatal death charity). The shawl is wrapped around the baby for the parents to hold them. The shawl is then placed in their 'Memory Box'. They do bring great comfort.

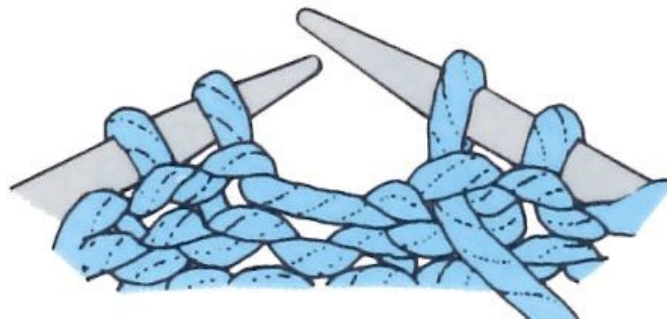


OTHER KNITS

Children's jumpers up to age 10 and knitted hats and scarves are also given to Church of the Martyrs for the asylum seekers.

If you would like to knit or crochet lap blankets for the elderly please do so and contact your nearest Residential Home, who often welcome them. Don't forget to put a Mothers' Union label on them.

This could be adopted as a Branch or Deanery project.



KNITTING PATTERN BOOKS

When considering re-writing our booklet it was decided to use the one published by Dublin Mothers' Union.

(Why re-invent the wheel?)

Over 100 were sold so we hope you are enjoying knitting the variety of patterns especially prayer shawls, chickens and baptism teddies.

However we still have copies of our original booklet which has been updated. Copies are available from the office and at Diocesan Council meetings.

FIDDLE BLANKETS

A workshop was held demonstrating how to make these for use by the elderly and those with dementia or Alzheimer's and the pattern can be found in the Dublin knitting pattern book. This could become a branch or deanery project for your local care homes.



KNITTED TEDDY BEARS

These knitted teddies have been a great hit with the children who visit their dads in prison and the vulnerable children known to social workers.

Instructions have been given by MU Head Office at Mary Sumner House that all teddies must adhere to the Toy Safety Directive. This means that all yarn must be BS EN71-3 tested e.g. Sirdar, Patons etc. and all polyester filling reach BS5852 and BS1425 standard. Only the given pattern can be used, knitting with 3mm needles to ensure no stuffing can be seen. Tinsel and mohair yarns are to be avoided. The knitter must sign to say this has been done.

In spite of these new rules please persevere as the teddies are so popular.

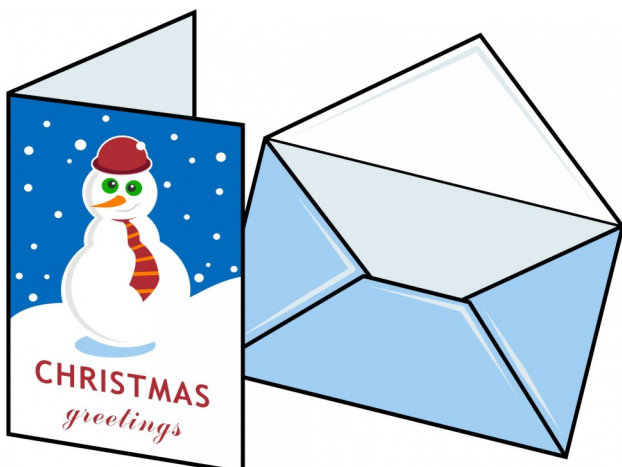


WORK WITH PRISONS IN LEICESTERSHIRE

Mothers' Union members help in the new coffee bar style Visits Centre called Gateway in Welford Road Prison, Leicester, and at the Visits Registration in Gartree Prison.

Children who visit their dads in prison are given a teddy to take home with them.

Each year Christmas cards are given out at Diocesan Council for members to sign (Christian names only) for the prisoners in Welford Road Prison. Members often ask their Vicar to bless both the cards and those who will receive them before returning them unsealed to the November Council meeting.



CHRISTMAS GIFTS FOR THOSE IN MENTAL HEALTH UNITS

100g bars of chocolate are wrapped and distributed to patients in the Belvoir, Bennion and Herschel Prins centres at Glenfield Hospital and the Evington Centre at the General Hospital at Christmas.

Please bring these to the last Diocesan Council meeting of the year (usually November).

These are very much appreciated by both patients and staff.

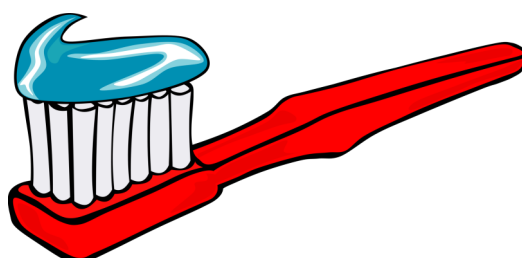


TOILETRY BAGS

These consist of a drawstring bag filled with toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, facecloth and comb (not tail comb). All these can be purchased from Wilko or similar quite cheaply.

Please discard any cardboard packaging before bringing them to Diocesan Council.

The bags are given to the Accident and Emergency Unit at the Leicester Royal Infirmary, also to Dalglish Ward at Melton Mowbray Hospital.





BAPTISMS AND WEDDINGS

It is important we look within our own church to see where help is needed.

As well as supporting our clergy with prayer, many branches help with Baptisms and Weddings.

For example, making jams and marmalades or bring and buy sales can raise funds to give flowers and a *Families First* magazine or a Bible to the new parents; providing refreshments for a Marriage Preparation Day (just a plate of sandwiches or cakes doesn't break the bank); helping with Baptism visits or sending Anniversary cards (MU shop has a lovely selection).

Ask your Vicar how you can help.

EASTER EGGS

For many years the Diocese has collected Easter eggs for needy children.

This is now done locally by each branch.

There is a pattern for a chicken in the Dublin knitting book to fill with a small egg.

Perhaps you could sell these to raise funds.



LINK DIOCESES

Since 2015 we have 5 new Link Dioceses who pray for each other especially between 29th June and 1st July every year.

EASTERN ZAMBIA

Zambia is a landlocked country in southern Africa. MU members are passionate about helping the elderly, sick and orphans.

They run meetings to help victims of gender based violence and aim to build their MU to be self-sustaining, working as part of the church.

MOMBASA(KENYA)

15,763 members have a very active programme running parenting and marriage relationship seminars, adult literacy projects and prison visiting.

They also run a coconut oil project and lobby decision makers.

GWAGWALADA (NIGERIA)

Situated in central Nigeria, this diocese was inaugurated in 1999.

They outreach to the needy, including widows and the aged.

They also visit the sick and provide Bible study and fellowship.



EKITI-WEST (NIGERIA)

This diocese was also inaugurated in 1999.

They organise training events to help members develop spiritually and physically.

MU members are facing the issue of teenage pregnancy in the region and have a vision of being able to provide vocational training for the less privileged, especially widows and orphans.

TEMOTU (SOLOMON ISLANDS, MELANESIA)

The diocese lies south-east of Papua New Guinea, north of Australia.

In 2013 there were earthquakes followed by a tsunami so the last few years have been spent rebuilding and restoring livelihoods.

1,449 MU members help with a Positive Parenting Programme and are committed to strengthening marriage and family life.

PLEASE PRAY FOR ALL OUR MEMBERS ESPECIALLY IN OUR LINK DIOCESES. THEY PRAY FOR US.



MOTHERS' UNION

Mothers' Union is an international Christian organisation that seeks to support marriage and families worldwide with prayer and practical help.

In over 80 countries our members share a heart-felt vision – to bring about a world where God's love is shown through loving, respectful and flourishing relationships.

Produced by Leicester Diocese
Action and Outreach Unit

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