

**DOMINICAN SISTERS (THIRD ORDER)  
CONGREGATION OF NEWCASTLE NATAL**

Established at Bushey Heath, Hertfordshire

(Registered number 233236)

ANNUAL REPORT

YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020



**DOMINICAN SISTERS (THIRD ORDER) CONGREGATION OF NEWCASTLE NATAL**  
**(Registered Number 233236)**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**31 DECEMBER 2020**

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**Saint Dominic Founder of the Order of Preachers**  
**(1170 – 1221)**

**DOMINICAN SISTERS (THIRD ORDER) CONGREGATION OF NEWCASTLE NATAL**  
**TRUSTEE, OFFICERS AND PROFESSIONAL ADVISORS**

**TRUSTEE OF THE CHARITY**

Saint Rose of Lima Association Limited, the Directors and Officers of which are the Congregation Prioress and Congregation Council members of the Sisters of the Dominican Congregation of Saint Catherine of Siena of Newcastle Natal, as below

**CONGREGATION PRIORESS AND DIRECTOR OF THE TRUSTEE**

M. F. Cunningham (Sister Felicity OP)

**CONGREGATION COUNCILLORS AND DIRECTORS OF THE TRUSTEE**

M. C. Tuohy (Sister Maria OP), Congregation Vicarress & Sister Bursar  
K. E. d'Artois (Sister Karen Marguerite OP)  
E. Airey (Sister Eileen OP)

**SISTER BURSAR**

M. Tuohy (Sister Maria OP)

**GENERAL BURSAR**

P. M. Kelly FIA Retired

**FINANCE MANAGER**

R. D. Bolton FCA

**ADDRESS**

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93 Elstree Road  
Bushey Heath  
Bushey WD23 4EE

**Telephone:** 020 8950 6065

**Website:** [www.dominicansisters.co.uk](http://www.dominicansisters.co.uk)

**CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER**

233236

**AUDITORS**

BDO LLP  
55 Baker Street, London W1U 7EU

**SOLICITORS**

Farrer & Co LLP  
66 Lincoln's Inn Fields  
London WC2A 3LH

Stone King LLP  
13 Queen Square  
Bath BA1 2HJ

McGrath LLP  
66/67 Newman Street  
London W1T 3EQ

**BANKERS**

Royal Bank of Scotland plc  
London Drummonds Branch, 49 Charing Cross, London SW1A 2DX

**INVESTMENT MANAGERS**

Rathbone Investment Management Limited  
8 Finsbury Circus, London EC2M 7AZ

**CUSTODIAN TRUSTEES**

Bank of New York Mellon and Rathbone Nominees Limited

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The Directors of the Trustee present the Trustee's Report and the audited financial statements of the Dominican Sisters (Third Order) Congregation of Newcastle Natal for the year ended 31 December 2020. The Charity encompasses the European (UK and Rome) activities of the religious congregation titled Sisters of the Dominican Congregation of Saint Catherine of Siena of Newcastle, Natal. Sisters of the Charity (40 at 31 December 2020; 42 at 31 December 2019) ministered in England and Italy. Other sisters of the religious congregation (30 at 31 December 2020; 31 at 31 December 2019) minister in South Africa, six (2019: two) ministering in five not for profit entities but the Charity has no financial interest in their operation and these financial statements do not include their activities. Further information on the basis of accounting is set out in Note 1 to the Financial Statements.

The accounts accompanying this report are the accounts of the charitable trust on which the assets in Europe of the Congregation are held. They include all the Charity's activities in Europe and follow the Charities SORP (FRS102 second edition – October 2019).

**Our Aims:** The objective of the Charity is the advancement of the Roman Catholic Religion and the support of any associated charitable work for the time being carried on through the Trustee with the approval of the Congregation Prioress.

**Original Mission:** Our aims stem from the original mission of Mother Rose Niland who in 1896 founded the Sisters of Saint Catherine of Siena, within the Dominican tradition, in Newcastle, South Africa. Like so many active congregations founded at the time, Mother Rose set out to meet the urgent social need for education among the indigenous and colonial population. These early pioneers were women of great faith and courage who took enormous risks and suffered considerable hardships. Part of their legacy was fine schools, some of which still exist. Among these pioneers there was an urgency and zeal to evangelise as well as to educate. In this they were faithful to the Dominican motto: To give to others the fruits of our contemplation.

As Dominican Sisters we find inspiration in the following quotation from the Basic Constitution:

*To perfect our love of God and neighbour in the following of Christ, by religious profession we are enrolled in the Order of Preachers, completely consecrated to God in a new way, dedicated to the whole Church, and totally engaged in spreading the Word of God.*  
(Basic Constitution of the Order of Preachers, Para III)

## **Geographical location and operation of the Charity**

The Charity operates in the following countries: United Kingdom and Italy.

## **Governance, structure and management**

### **Governance**

The terms of the Charity Governance Code have been considered. The Code was refreshed in 2020, published in December, and the changes focussed on 'integrity' and 'equality, diversity and inclusion'. The Trustee believes the Charity meets the principles of the good governance code. In the Charity's particular circumstances, there are not role descriptions defining responsibilities for all Directors of the Trustee: each is collectively and individually responsible. Directors of the Trustee are appointed by the General Chapter meeting (see page 3 below) and are drawn from the sisters of the religious congregation.

In terms of civil law, the Charity is formally established by a Trust Deed dated 20 January 1953 as varied by the provisions of a Scheme sealed on 4 May 1995 and is a registered charity – Charity Registration No. 233236. The Trustee of the Charity is Saint Rose of Lima Association Limited and is an English company which is limited by guarantee. It acts through its four Directors and Officers who are the Congregation Prioress and her Council. As such, they have detailed knowledge of the work of the Charity and its structure. New Directors on being appointed are required to familiarise themselves with the responsibilities of being a trustee, and on the Charity's position.

The names of the Directors and Officers who served during the year are set out in the reference and administrative details on page 1 of this report and accounts. Brief pen portraits of each of the Directors of the Trustee are set out below:

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**Sister Felicity Cunningham** was elected Congregation Prioress in December 2016 and appointed Director of the Charity on 28 April 2017. Prior to her election, she was Region Prioress in South Africa. After some years in the teaching profession, she spent several years in parish ministry and a number of years in formation ministry.

**Sister Maria Tuohy** was elected Councillor in December 2016 and appointed Director of the Charity on 28 April 2017. She was teaching in secondary education for many years and subsequently engaged in administration of the Charity. She was previously Councillor and a Director of the Charity from 1982 to 1993.

**Sister Karen Marguerite d'Artois** was elected Councillor in December 2016 and appointed Director of the Charity on 28 April 2017. She has worked in university chaplaincy and faith formation for children and adults and trained in formation ministry. With a strong background in administration, she is also currently Co-ordinator of the Niland Conference Centre run by the Charity.

**Sister Eileen Airey** was elected Councillor in December 2016 and appointed Director of the Charity on 28 April 2017. She was teaching at secondary level for eleven years and was also head of religious education for three years in this period. In 1993 she was elected to the Congregation Council, returning from Argentina, and worked in team ministry in several parishes in the Stevenage area. In 2000 she returned to mission work in Argentina for three years, returning again in 2006 for another two years. In between she was a parish sister in Harpenden and, from 2009, in Aberdare, Wales. In 2011, she went to South Africa as formator of the young sisters in training and was involved in retreat work until 2017.

The Congregation Prioress and her Council are elected every six years at a General Chapter Meeting of the Congregation. The General Chapter, composed of elected and ex-officio members, elects the Congregation Prioress and her Congregation Councillors on the basis of their personal qualities, their understanding and experience of the ministries of sisters and to provide a useful mix of skills. Following their election to Congregation Council, these sisters are appointed Directors of the Trustee and are responsible for the organisation of the Charity and the administration of its assets. It is their duty to ensure that the activities undertaken are for the advancement of the objects of the Charity. Decisions are taken by the Congregation Prioress and her Council as the Directors of the Trustee.

The Congregation Prioress visits all the convents and houses of the Congregation either personally or by delegate every three years. The purpose of the visitation is that she may endeavour to examine and assess the quality of community and apostolic life and that she may come to know the sisters better by giving them an opportunity to make known their needs and their opinions about the life, apostolate and administration of the community. Systems of accountability mean that the Congregation Prioress and her Councillors are aware of and able to assist with the progress and development of the ministries carried out by the sisters.

### **Bursars and Local Communities**

The Sister Bursar, Sister Maria Tuohy, is responsible for the handling of financial and property matters and attending and reporting on these at meetings of the Directors of the Trustee. She is assisted by the General Bursar and the Finance Manager, both being lay staff.

Each local community is governed by an elected Prioress or appointed Leader.

House Bursars are responsible for financial aspects of local communities. A number of sisters have been granted budgets for the expenditure they incur in the course of their ministries and report monthly on their use of this facility.

### **Remuneration of Directors of the Trustee**

While the Directors of the Trustee have been maintained in accordance with the Charity's duty to provide for the sisters, they have received no remuneration whether in the course of their duties or otherwise. Any income paid to them in the course of their work has been given to the Charity.

### **Remuneration of Key Management Personnel**

Initial remuneration levels of key management personnel were established by surveying comparative rates and negotiation with the individuals. Historically, when there were a significant number of other employees, subsequent annual reviews of pay applied the same change as applied to them. Now, reviews are informed by the Bank of England agents' survey of real wage growth or the Office of National Statistics, as available.

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## **Risk Management**

In line with the requirement for the Trustee to undertake a risk assessment exercise and report on the same in this report, the Directors of the Trustee have identified the major risks to which the Charity is exposed. The Directors of the Trustee have identified the following main areas where risks may occur:

- ◆ The Charity's Work
- ◆ Governance and Management
- ◆ Operational
- ◆ Safeguarding
- ◆ Data Protection
- ◆ Information/Cyber Security
- ◆ Social Media
- ◆ Financial

**The Charity's Work:** considers the activity of the Charity which is primarily the advancement of the Roman Catholic Religion and associated charitable work. Factors considered include that this may require to be reinterpreted in the circumstance that sisters are ageing and few new members are joining. The Directors of the Trustee monitor this aspect.

**Governance and Management:** considers the efficacy of the trustee body. Risks considered are of a trustee body which lacked sufficient skills, commitment and appropriate decision-making procedures. Such risks could include a lack of training of sisters and staff or poor stewardship of resources – human, financial and property. The Directors of the Trustee monitor this aspect and engage in appropriate courses and training.

**Operational:** seeks to guard against the possibility of danger to the health, safety and well-being of those with whom we come in contact, of employees and of sisters; and against the potential risk that the property and buildings of the Charity could suffer alienation or damage or may not be appropriately adapted for use by the physically or mentally challenged. The Directors of the Trustee arrange for specialist advice to be retained in this area, and for appropriate insurance cover.

**Lifelong Safeguarding:** Child and vulnerable adult policies and procedures are in place both in relation to ministry engagement of sisters and in relation to our own vulnerable adults. In its compliance with the One Church Approach, the Trustee is committed to implement the policies and procedures emerging from the adoption of the Elliott Review (November 2020) by the Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales and the Conference of Religious of England and Wales, viz., to contract with the new Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency upon its launch in June 2021, and to avail of the service-provision of the Religious Life Safeguarding Services, also anticipated from June 2021. The Trustee will also subscribe to the new National Tribunal Service. The Directors of the Trustee have appointed an employee to monitor and advise on this aspect and themselves engage in training.

**Data Protection:** seeks to guard against potentially damaging threats to our and others' data, whether internal or external, deliberate or accidental. The Directors of the Trustee have appointed an employee to monitor and advise on this aspect.

**Information/Cyber Security:** seeks to guard against potentially damaging threats to our operations through wrongful removal of information in whatever form or hacking of systems and communications. The Directors of the Trustee are spreading knowledge of such activities and encouraging continual awareness of this risk area and its continual evolution.

**Social Media:** seeks to guard against the inappropriate use of social media and potential danger to our reputation through such use. The Directors of the Trustee have established a policy for this aspect which is disseminated amongst personnel, and for spreading knowledge of such activities and encouraging continual awareness of this risk area and its continual evolution.

**Financial:** seeks to guard against the potential risk to the Charity from fraud or financial irregularity, which could include unauthorised expenditure, inappropriate investment policies, and unreliable accounting. The Directors of the Trustee have established appropriate separation of roles and authority levels for those dealing with the Charity's assets.

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As indicated above, having identified the major risks to which the Charity is exposed, the Directors of the Trustee have established systems and procedures to mitigate those risks as far as reasonably possible. All policies are updated regularly to assure right practice.

## **Realising the Charity's Objective**

The Directors of the Trustee have given due consideration to the Charity Commission's published guidance on the Public Benefit requirement under the Charities Act 2011.

Advancement of the Roman Catholic Religion for Public Benefit, the Charity's main objective, is realised in the following ways:

- 1 Worship and Prayer Life
- 2 Education
- 3 Caring, Pastoral and Social Ministries
- 4 Collaboration
- 5 Use of Houses of the Charity
- 6 Lay Associates

**Covid-19 and consequent lock downs seriously limited our public-facing activities in 2020 and have continued to do so thus far in 2021. At this difficult and socially distanced time, our sisters have engaged in Zoom meetings, spoken with people on the telephone and prayed for all in need of support. The operation of our activities in normal times is considered in more detail below together with some ongoing endeavours:**

### **1. Worship and Prayer Life**

The daily celebration of the Liturgy, the prayer of the people of God – the Eucharist and the Prayer of the Church – is one of the principal elements in our Dominican Life. Members of the Congregation are given the opportunity for private prayer, ongoing formation, study of the Scriptures, and days of recollection. In each of our houses, members invite people from the wider community to join us in prayer. Our preaching mission can only emerge out of a life rooted in prayer and praise. When we leave the liturgy, we are being missioned back to the world, to 'give to others the fruits of our contemplation'. Members are open to receiving and listening to people seeking spiritual guidance and help.

In normal times the place of prayer, silence and retreat at Cricklewood, is valued by its users. Prior to Covid-19 the beautiful pousinia (a place of prayer) has been well used and open to anyone wishing to have a 'place apart'. In addition, sisters are available to offer a listening ear and to give spiritual guidance and direction. With the easing of lockdown restrictions, access to the gardens and Chapel has been restored, with stringent Covid-19 protocols in place.

In normal times all houses welcome parish groups for study and discussion and sisters support prayer groups and Gospel-sharing groups. These groups, meeting regularly, give the public an opportunity to escape the stresses of everyday life for a short time and enable quiet contemplation and reflection.

In normal times at the Niland Conference Centre, sisters offer courses for Adult Faith Formation and Formation for Parish Ministry, as well as workshops, retreats and days of reflection for all who are interested. These days are opportunities to reflect on the interaction of the spiritual, social and cultural realms. Post Covid-19 we are offering reflections and Scripture courses on Zoom. The move to Zoom has been greatly appreciated by individuals who find it difficult to come out of an evening. Thus there was a greater cross-section of participants at the most recent course.

Throughout these months of pandemic, this most fundamental aspect of sisters' lives has had an even higher prominence, as individuals and Communities have devoted themselves wholeheartedly to praying for individual needs as well as the needs of the whole world and, in particular, for an end to the pandemic. Thus, the most immeasurable aspect of our contribution to society and public benefit has seen the greatest impetus and growth throughout the whole of 2020.

### **2. Education**

The Charity has been engaged in the ministry of education since its foundation. Education remains a cornerstone of our ministry as Dominican women and is regarded as an essential agent in evangelisation. One of the areas of focus in this regard is Adult Formation at the Niland Conference Centre. One sister is Co-ordinator of the Niland Conference Centre and, supported by sister team members, in normal times the

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Dominican charism of preaching the Gospel remains at the heart of all the activities and events hosted at the Niland Conference Centre.

Other sisters have been engaged (subject to appropriate restrictions):

- at the Pontifical University of St Thomas (Angelicum) in Rome as Vice Rector and as Vice Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, as Project Director of the formation project "Catholic Social Thought in Central and Eastern Europe 2020", Senior Advisor to the "Blueprint for Better Business", Consultor to the Pontifical Council of Justice and Peace, teaching courses: "History of Economics"; "History of Christian Social thought"; "Economic Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility", and running seminars: "Catholic Social Thought and the UN 2030 agenda"; "Putting Catholic social thought into practice"; in August 2020 Sister was appointed Ordinary Academician of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences;
- as the Vice Secretary General at the Pontifical University of St Thomas (Angelicum) in Rome; assisting and mentoring students who are writing their Doctoral Theses; Spiritual Adviser for the Angelicum Dominican English speaking Lay Fraternity; Financial Aid Officer for William E Simon and Reginald de Rocquois and McCaddin Scholarships; Contact Officer for USA government Federal loans;
- in volunteering in a local Catholic Secondary School, founded by the Congregation, with a view to undertaking teacher training.

In normal times other sisters are engaged:

- in supporting and working with schools and parishes, through running in-service training days for staff and catechists who themselves are involved in promoting the Catholic faith;
- in children's catechesis and sacramental preparation in a local parish;
- in supporting the local parish priest and ministry to a university chaplaincy;
- in providing theological education for adults in a local parish;
- in providing retreats for staff and pupils of Catholic schools. Some of these retreats take place in their schools and parishes and others at the Niland Conference Centre.

### **3. Caring, Pastoral and Social Ministries**

In normal times, a number of our sisters are engaged in parish ministries. These include:

- being active in catechetics
- assisting in the training of catechists
- being volunteer chaplains at hospitals
- arranging retreat days for groups in local parishes
- organising and running reflection and musical events during the main seasons of the Church's liturgical year.

In fulfilling their individual ministries sisters aim to carry out various forms of social and pastoral work. Through this work, the Charity attempts to reach out to those in need and aims to benefit a significant number of people.

Some examples of the work of individual sisters in 2019 and 2020 are given below by way of illustration:

- A number of sisters are involved in ministry as pastoral workers. Their ministry takes them into areas of need amongst the poor, the elderly and infirm (some of whom are in their own homes, others in nursing homes). Sisters visit them regularly and offer help where they can. Often these people long for their visits when they find someone who is prepared to listen and help. In both areas of poverty and areas where the aged are living, the sister may be the only other human face they see for days on end. Sisters are also involved in Parishes where they reach out to the poor and needy through religious education and social support.
- A sister is involved in prison ministry.
- Several sisters assist at local food banks or organisations that provide meals for the homeless.
- A sister is involved, with others, in a centre that focuses on the needs of asylum seekers, refugees and vulnerable women who have been trafficked and are being rehabilitated. The women are assisted and relevant authorities contacted in an effort to give the help they need.
- To draw attention to the needs in society, sisters lobby and participate with others in an effort to bring change for the good of society. Sisters have been active in drawing attention to the

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challenges and risks of climate change, issues which affect the whole world.

The Charity enables and supports individual members of the Congregation in ministry and outreach work thereby furthering the message set out in the Gospel. While these active and outside ministries may have been seriously curtailed by the pandemic, sisters have continued to reach out to individuals and remain in contact with the organisations with whom they collaborate in ordinary circumstances. Indeed, because of an even greater awareness of the isolation faced by so many through the pandemic, sisters have made an even more conscious effort to keep in touch with individuals who are in need of a listening, understanding ear.

#### **4. Collaboration with Religious and Other Organisations in the Church**

Such collaboration in 2019 and, to a degree but hampered, in 2020 includes:

- collaborating with other Religious Institutes in working with Caritas Westminster:
  - (a) in offering support to migrants and abused and dislocated people,
  - (b) in setting up an organisation called Safe in Faith addressing high levels of domestic abuse in local areas;
- hosting days of renewal, reflection and prayer to which all religious and parishes are invited;
- working with Anglican and Baptist Churches in offering pastoral care and a listening ear;
- working in a team at Women at the Well – a drop-in day centre at Kings Cross for vulnerable women with varied needs;
- assisting in the office of Blackfriars Hall in Oxford which is the studium of the English Province of the Dominican Order;
- collaborating with the Diocese of Westminster Agency for Evangelisation to offer courses, retreats and opportunities for faith formation;
- the ongoing involvement of the Congregation Prioress in UISG (International Union of Superiors General) which keeps the Charity updated on global needs and concerns;
- through the Congregation Prioress, representing the Charity at COR (Conference of Religious of England and Wales), being fully involved in Dominican Sisters International, the Dominican Association of Britain and Ireland, and in DSE (Dominican Sisters Europe) keeping the Charity and Congregation in touch with what is happening in Religious life in general, as well as at the level of the Dominican Order;
- sisters continuing to collaborate with other Dominicans through their participation in Dominican Family Days, the annual Dominican Seminar and meetings of lay Dominicans;
- Directors of the Trustee participating in study days, conferences on the consecrated life and charity conferences.

#### **5. Houses of the Charity with a special emphasis**

- The houses of the Charity are places of hospitality and their facilities are offered for public benefit in a variety of ways: for example, in normal times one community has hosted events of significance for those from local nursing and care homes.
- As mentioned above, in Cricklewood our St Rose's Chapel, Peace Garden and Poustinia try to offer a quiet place for reflection, prayer and silence to those of all faiths seeking peace and tranquillity away from the noise and busyness of everyday life, albeit hampered for much of 2020.
- In normal times, St Michael's Convent has been regularly used by Church and local groups for meetings, discussions and day events, mostly led by the sisters. The convent chapel has also been open for private prayer.
- In normal times our convent at Rosary Priory is regularly used for courses on prayer, reflection and music appreciation.

#### **6. Lay Associates**

- A Lay Associates programme encourages lay people to share the Dominican charism of the Congregation through developing their personal spirituality, strengthening their faith and prayer life, and fulfilling their baptismal mission in their family life, work place, neighbourhood and local Parish.
- Lay Associates are individually affiliated to the Congregation by a process of formation and, should they so choose, a formal commitment to continue formation in the Dominican charism.
- The formation of these Lay Associates is another aspect of the mission of Education of the

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Congregation, as it extends the theological and spiritual education of its Associates.

Members of the Lay Associates are promoting for new members in local Parishes and in schools which we had originally established and where we continue to have strong links.

- The Lay Associates programme has benefitted from the move from in-person to Zoom gatherings: more frequent meetings have become possible in the absence of the need to travel. Similarly, larger numbers of Associates are able to take part in these gatherings more consistently.

## **The Mission of the Congregation in South Africa**

The Charity supports the Congregation mission in South Africa and the charitable works there, particularly evangelisation, education for life programmes and care of the poor, destitute and needy.

## **Strategic Plan for 2020 and Future Plans**

The latest Strategic Plan was formed in December 2016 at the 18th General Chapter of the Congregation, and recorded in the 2016 Acts of the General Chapter. The General Chapter theme: 'Make ready to proclaim the Gospel', 'Preach the word, be urgent in season and out of season' permeates the mission of the Congregation for the six years to 2022. The responsibility of the Congregation Council then elected is to implement the strategic plan to lead the Congregation forward in fidelity to the mandates of the 2016 Acts of the General Chapter. The background to the strategic plan is a commitment that:

- the mission of preaching requires every community to continue to reach out towards fresh expression of classic Dominican preaching and to articulate this in contemporary language for promotion of vocations to fast-changing generations
- our finances need to be well managed to enable future mission
- our corporate witness to truth and justice needs greater focus
- our future calls us to think increasingly of collaboration and healing of past differences and the suffering it caused
- pastoral care of frail and elderly sisters includes deeper issues of ageing, life stages and dying
- formation continues to be a priority and that sisters have a responsibility to develop their own on-going formation plans including continuing study of theology.

The Strategic Plan of the Directors of the Trustee continued to focus on the formation of members. The Initial Formation Team is charged with preparing, training and educating applicants to become fully active members of the Congregation and to implement effectively the aims of the Charity. A further aim of the Initial Formation Team is to provide programmes for each stage of formation up to the final profession of religious vows. Implementation of these aims is in process.

In support of the aims of the Charity, the Directors of the Trustee remain indebted to the following employees:

- The Data Protection and Safeguarding Lead
- The Finance Team.

## **Fundraising Statement**

Section 162a of the Charities Act 2011 requires charities to make a statement regarding fundraising activities. Although this Charity does not undertake widespread fundraising from the general public, the legislation defines fund raising as "soliciting or otherwise procuring money or other property for charitable purposes." Such amounts receivable are presented in our accounts within "income from charitable activities" and amount to £20,000 (2019: £66,000). There are no legacies or grants received in either year. We also receive occasional unsolicited donations.

In relation to the above we confirm that all solicitations are managed internally, without involvement of commercial participators or professional fund-raisers or third parties. The day to day management of all income generation is delegated to the executive team, who are accountable to the Trustee.

The Charity is not bound by any undertaking of any regulatory scheme and the Charity's activities do not require it to pay attention to any voluntary code of practice.

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## **Financial Review**

### **Trustee's Responsibilities**

The Trustee is responsible for annually preparing the Trustee's Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Charity law requires the Trustee to prepare financial statements for each financial year that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources for the year. In preparing those financial statements, the Trustee is required:-

- to select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- to observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- to make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- to prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in operation.

The Trustee is responsible for keeping accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and enable it to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011 and regulations made thereunder. It is also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

### **Basis of Preparation of these Accounts**

The 2020 financial statements of the Charity are attached to this report. They are prepared on the basis of full reporting of the Charity's activities wherever carried out – currently this is in the UK and Rome.

The Trustee considers there are no material uncertainties about the Trust's ability to continue as a going concern. As the financial statements in the following pages show, the financial consequences of Covid-19 have impacted on the Charity in the year under review, and they continue to do so. The Officers of the Trustee have considered all the matters described in this Trustee's report including the Charity's operations, the impact on voluntary and education income, as well as the impact on the Charity's investment portfolio. In particular, in order to support the assessment of the sustainability of the Charity's activities the Officers of the Trustee have prepared a highly pessimistic scenario of no investment or other income being received other than covenanted UK pensions from sisters of the Congregation. In the Charity's particular circumstances there are no alternative scenarios whether from the impact of Covid-19 or otherwise that can realistically be produced to derive alternative assumptions for budgeted forecasts, most costs being essentially fixed in nature although there have been some savings made in 2020. As at the date of signature of these financial statements this pessimistic forecast indicates that the Charity will be able to maintain liquidity for a period of at least a year (and in fact considerably longer) from the date of signature of these financial statements and will therefore be able to continue to operate as a going concern.

The Charity's reserves are unrestricted.

The Trustee does not anticipate a change in its operations. Although the Trustee cannot estimate what the position may be, it will be concerned to provide support to the charitable mission of the Congregation in South Africa should that be necessary.

Following guidance issued by the Charity Commission (CC15c) these financial statements are prepared under the Charities SORP (FRS 102 second edition – October 2019) rather than SORP 2005 as required by the Charities (Accounts and Reports Regulations 2008). This departure is made to provide a true and fair view.

As required, the Trustee reports that no assets were held as custodian trustee during the reporting period.

### **Financial Outcome of the Year**

A major event in 2020 (and continuing) was that on 31 January 2020 the World Health Organisation announced that Covid-19 constituted a global health emergency. Previously the virus had been thought to be confined to the Wuhan area in China and significant measures were not taken by the Chinese government and private sector organisations until early in that year.

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In Spring 2020 this gave rise to a significant loss of confidence in investment markets and falls in value. Inevitably, this impacted on the market value of the Charity's holdings of investments excluding cash which were 2019: £54.3m (2018: 46.0m). Our 2020 Trustee Report noted that by 1 April 2020, including the impact of sales, the market value of securities was £43.9m, the securities having fallen by some 15%.

Through 2020 given the uncertain climate the Trustee took steps to increase the liquidity of the investment portfolio using, in particular, short dated Government bills of guaranteed maturity value but giving rise to negligible income. Over the course of 2020 investment markets recovered much of the initial loss of confidence so that by the end of the year the net loss on investments was £0.4m. In contrast, 2019 had been a particularly euphoric year, over the course of which the net gain on investments was £6.7m.

As this Report explains, the income from investments is important, being the Charity's main income source (2020: 69% of income & 2019: 73%). As was the situation a year ago, the Trustee cannot forecast what the future dividend and interest flows may be – the case continues that some entities may fail, others may have to reduce their distributions, while some others may be able to a degree to resume distribution. However, the flow of investment income in 2020 was 24% less than in 2019, and the Trustee cannot forecast when or to what extent this situation may change.

The next element of the Charity's income is donated pensions from sisters (being 29% of the lower income of 2020, 23% in 2019 & 24% in 2018). Subject to sisters' mortality and HM UK Government finances, these pensions are reasonably certain leaving, on the pessimistic assumption that no other income is receivable, £1.5m of estimated 2021 expenditure to be covered (2019: £1.7m). In February 2021 a property was sold for £0.6m it being no longer required for the Charity's Mission. The £3.5m investment cash at banks will cover a £1.5m shortfall for some 2.3 years (2019: 2.4 years). There then remains the value of the security holdings and the other properties from which the Charity operates.

Overall, income totalled £1.9m (2019: £2.3m) before including gains or losses on revaluing investment assets. Net expenditure before taking account of gains or losses on investments was £0.1m (2019: £0.3m net income). On investment assets in 2020 there was a net loss of £0.4m. This figure masks considerable volatility – the loss on investments in the first quarter of £6.6m less the recoveries in the second quarter of £4.2m and in the fourth quarter of £2.2m. In 2019 there was a gain on investment assets of £6.7m following increased optimism by the end of 2019 and the market recovery from the late 2018 decline. Including these, net expenditure was £0.5m (2019: income £7.0m). Measured against sterling (the Charity's functional currency) during 2020 the Euro and Swiss franc rose against sterling and the US dollar fell: during 2019 the US dollar, Euro and Swiss franc rose against sterling. The exchange gain of £17k (2019: loss £37k) arose from restatement in pounds sterling of balances denominated in those currencies and translation to £ sterling (the reporting currency) of transactions undertaken in currencies.

The Statement of Financial Activities and the Notes to this set out the areas of income and expenditure and further information on these.

The balance sheet shows total funds under the Charity's control of £61.2m (2019: £61.6m). These funds are used to support the ongoing charitable work of the Charity. For example, tangible assets including property account for £4.3m (2019: £4.4m) of this total and comprise the net book value of premises occupied for the Charity's work and of equipment and vehicles used in this. Further, the investments and short term deposits shown in the balance sheet at £56.6m (2019: £57.0m) are held for the income they earn which goes towards financing the Charity's present and future objective. The Charity receives little by way of donations from the public, donations received almost entirely being from sisters' pension rights.

The Statement of Cash Flows reports cash used in operating activities of £1.3m (2019: £1.3m) and dividends and interest received of £1.3m (2019: £1.7m), emphasising the importance of the cash flow from the Charity's investments. The reduction in dividends was a further manifestation of the impact of Covid-19 in the year. The unusually large investment transaction flows followed from the Trustee's requirement for a higher level of guaranteed liquidity.

## **Reserves Policy**

The Trustee has continued to consider the policy to be adopted on the need for reserves. In common with most religious groups there have been five important trends affecting the Charity in recent years:

- the rate of income received on investments has seriously declined and there has been increased volatility in market values;
- the average age of sisters continues to increase both because of fewer new entrants and the greater longevity of existing sisters;

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- mortality of older sisters means there is increasing risk that pensions currently in payment will cease;
- few of the sisters following their vocation are earning pay which is commensurate with their qualifications; and
- for the same reason, the few younger sisters have little entitlement to future pensioning.

The Trustee's overall objective for reserves is to seek to maintain them at such a level that, excluding gains or losses on investments and translation, the income generated for a year, taking one year with another, meets the cost of charitable expenditure to support the Charity's aims. While in 2019 recurring income broadly met expenditure, this was not the case in 2020 because of the reduced level of investment income following Covid-19. Even if there is some uptick in distribution levels, in the underlying climate of low investment income and increasing calls for expenditure this cannot be relied upon.

Looking at the position in more detail, in earlier years there were specific designated funds for savings and future needs. In 2016 the Directors of the Trustee decided to establish a continuity fund to absorb these varying needs in a single designation. The reality is that the Charity has almost no source of income other than that arising on its investments and the donations from its sisters. The Charity's assets are required to support expenditure by providing income, physical resource or funding.

In 2020, the income arising from the Fixed assets - Investments was £1.3m or 2.3% of £56.8m being the average of the opening and closing balance sheet Fixed assets - Investments figures. This income was the major part of the total income of £1.9m which covered most of the £2.0m total expenditure. In 2019, the income arising from the Fixed assets - Investments was £1.7m or 3.2% of £53.6m being the average of the opening and closing balance sheet Fixed assets - Investments figures. This income was the major part of the total income of £2.34m which covered the £2.07m total expenditure. Thus, in the circumstances of 2020 the Trustee's overall objective was not fully met although it had been in 2019. The figures demonstrate that the income on the Fixed assets - Investments is required as part of the total income to meet expenditure, taking one year with another. Looking at the reserves, which are all unrestricted reserves, the continuity fund is set at the same amount as the Fixed assets - Investments and at 31 December 2020 is £56.6m. (At 2019 it was £57.0m, the same as the £57.0m of Fixed assets - Investments.) The other designated fund is for property and equipment and reflects the extent to which assets are tied up in property, at 31 December 2020 being £4.3m (2019: £4.4m). Together, these represented almost all the £61.2m (2019: £61.6m) of reserves, leaving general funds at £0.3m (2019: £0.2m).

The Trustee will review the policy at least annually when the financial statements are considered for approval. The policy will be monitored in the meantime by the Sister Bursar.

## **Investment Policy**

The major part of the Charity's funds is held as investments with the aim of producing an income in the shorter term and capital growth in the longer term. Approximately every two years the Directors of the Trustee review the policy for investment. This was formally established in 1995, is aimed to be reviewed on about a two-year cycle and was reviewed in 2020. Recent reviews have been undertaken noting that the investment managers are retained in a discretionary role. The investment objective is to achieve a balance between income and capital growth, the longer-term growth being necessary to support the Charity's work by a growing income level. The Investment Managers have been provided with the Charity's Investment Policy and manage the portfolio knowing the Trustee's ethical views. In addition to access as required to the investment manager's portal and a monthly informal desktop valuation, the Trustee receives formal quarterly portfolio valuations and commentary with index comparisons, and meets the Investment Managers at least twice a year to discuss their approach and actions taken.

The Trustee requires appropriate diversification of holdings, both across different types of investment and different investment entities. As the Charity has been involved in work in various areas of the world and cannot know where future demands may arise, some investment is outside UK based companies. Unless it specifically decides otherwise, the Trustee requires that no single equity holding should exceed 3.5% of the portfolio of investments (at purchase 5% in the case of a UK Government security and 3% for other purchases) or 1% of the particular security issued. The Trustee seeks to avoid investment in companies whose business involves tobacco, the production of armaments or excessive exploitation of the world's resources or people, and direct investment in such contracts as futures, options and interest rate swaps unless these are to provide a level of insurance of portfolio value. However, the actual holdings are matters within the discretion of the Investment Managers.

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It is in the nature of valuation by the market that in some years there are increases and in others falls. The Trustee monitors the position and is in regular dialogue with the Investment Managers. Investment income in 2020 is £1.3m (2019 £1.7m).

**Disclosure of Information to the Charity's Auditors**

The Officers of the Trustee confirm that:

- so far as they are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the Charity's auditors are unaware; and
- they have taken all reasonable steps they ought to have taken as Officers of the Trustee in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Charity's auditors are aware of that information.

**THANKS**

Mention has been made earlier of the contribution of sisters, employees and support staff to the work of the Charity. In concluding this report, the Directors of the Trustee reiterate their appreciation.

This report was approved and authorised for issue by the Directors of the Trustee and the following were authorised to sign on the Trustee's behalf on 17 May 2021.

M. F. Cunningham  
Congregation Prioress  
Director of the Trustee

Date: 17 May 2021

K. E d'Artois  
Congregation Secretary  
Director of the Trustee

Date: 17 May 2021

## **INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEE OF DOMINICAN SISTERS (THIRD ORDER) CONGREGATION OF NEWCASTLE NATAL**

### **Opinion on the financial statements**

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Charity's affairs as at 31 December 2020 and of its incoming resources and application of resources for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

We have audited the financial statements of Dominican Sisters (Third Order) Congregation of Newcastle Natal ("the Charity") for the year ended 31 December 2020 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

### **Basis for opinion**

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the Charity in accordance with the ethical requirements relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

### **Conclusions related to going concern**

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Trustee's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Trustee with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

### **Other information**

The Trustee is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The other information comprises: The Trustee's Report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements, or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

### **Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities Act 2011 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

## **INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEE OF DOMINICAN SISTERS (THIRD ORDER) CONGREGATION OF NEWCASTLE NATAL**

- the information contained in the financial statements is inconsistent in any material respect with the Trustee's Annual Report; or
- adequate accounting records have not been kept by the Charity; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

### **Responsibilities of the Trustee**

As explained more fully in the Trustee's responsibilities statement, the Trustee is responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Trustee determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Trustee is responsible for assessing the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Trustee either intends to liquidate the Charity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

### **Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

We have been appointed as auditor under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with the Act and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

### **Extent to which the audit was capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud**

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

Based on our understanding of the Charity and the industry in which it operates, we identified the principal laws and regulations that directly affect the financial statements to be relevant Charities Acts in the UK and Ireland. We assessed the extent of compliance with these laws and regulations as part of our procedures on the related financial statement items. We considered the Charity's own assessment of the risks that irregularities may occur either as a result of fraud or error. We also considered the risks of non-compliance with other requirements imposed by the Charity Commission, and we considered the extent to which non-compliance might have a material effect on the financial statements.

In addition, the Charity is subject to many other laws and regulations where the consequences of non-compliance could have a material effect on amounts or disclosures in the financial statements, for instance through the imposition of fines or litigation. We identified the following areas as those most likely to have such an effect: employment law, data protection and health and safety legislation. Auditing standards limit the required audit procedures to identify non-compliance with these laws and regulations to enquiry of the Trustee and other management and inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence if any.

We understood how the Charity is complying with those legal and regulatory frameworks by making enquiries to management and those responsible for legal and compliance procedures. We corroborated our enquiries through our review of minutes and correspondences with HMRC and the various charity regulators.

Our tests included agreeing the financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation, enquiries of the Trustee and management, and a review of minutes of meetings of those charged with governance. We made enquiries regarding any matters identified as a Serious Incident as reportable to the Charity regulators. We also performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEE OF  
DOMINICAN SISTERS (THIRD ORDER) CONGREGATION OF NEWCASTLE NATAL**

We challenged assumptions made by management in their significant accounting estimates in particular in relation to depreciation (including component accounting), accruals, and cost allocation.

We did not identify any matters relating to irregularities, including fraud. As in all of our audits, we also addressed the risk of management override of internal controls, including testing journals including those which potentially impact remuneration and other performance targets and evaluating whether there was evidence of bias by management or the Board that represented a risk of material misstatement due to fraud.

Our audit procedures were designed to respond to risks of material misstatement in the financial statements, recognising that the risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery, misrepresentations or through collusion. There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures performed and the further removed is non-compliance with laws and regulations from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely we are to become aware of it.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located at the Financial Reporting Council's ("FRC's") website at:  
<https://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

**Use of our report**

This report is made solely to the Charity's trustee, as a body, in accordance with the Charities Act 2011. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Charity's trustee those matters we are required to state to it in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Charity and the Charity's trustee as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

DocuSigned by:  
  
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**BDO LLP**  
Statutory Auditor  
London, UK

Date: 17 June 2021

BDO LLP is eligible for appointment as auditor of the charity by virtue of its eligibility for appointment as auditor of a company under section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

BDO LLP is a limited liability partnership registered in England and Wales (with registered number OC305127).

**DOMINICAN SISTERS (THIRD ORDER) CONGREGATION OF NEWCASTLE NATAL**  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020**

		2020	2019
	Notes	£000	£000
<b>Income from:</b>			
Donations and legacies	3	549	553
Charitable activities	3	20	71
Investments	4	1,317	1,717
Other		2	2
<b>Total income</b>	5	<u>1,888</u>	<u>2,343</u>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>			
Raising funds - Investment management costs		108	113
Charitable activities	6	1,846	1,953
<b>Total expenditure</b>	5	<u>1,954</u>	<u>2,066</u>
<b>Net (expenditure/ income before net (losses)/ gains on investments</b>		( 66)	277
Net (losses)/ gains on investments	11	(369)	6,749
<b>Net (expenditure)/ income/</b>		<u>( 435)</u>	<u>7,026</u>
<b>Other recognised gains and losses</b>			
Foreign exchange gain/ (loss) on translation	15	17	(37)
<b>Movement in funds</b>		<u>( 418)</u>	<u>6,989</u>
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>			
Total funds brought forward	15	61,593	54,604
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	15	<u>61,175</u>	<u>61,593</u>

The above results for 2020 and 2019 are derived from continuing activities. The Charity has no recognised gains and losses other than those stated above; accordingly, a statement of total realised gains and losses has not been prepared.

**DOMINICAN SISTERS (THIRD ORDER) CONGREGATION OF NEWCASTLE NATAL**  
**BALANCE SHEET**  
**AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2020**

	Notes	2020 £000	2019 £000
<b>Fixed assets</b>			
Tangible assets	10	4,327	4,368
Investments	11	56,583	57,024
<b>Total fixed assets</b>		<u>60,910</u>	<u>61,392</u>
<b>Current assets</b>			
Debtors	12	131	158
Cash at bank and in hand	17	296	313
		<u>427</u>	<u>471</u>
<b>Liabilities</b>			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	(162)	(270)
<b>Net current assets</b>		<u>265</u>	<u>201</u>
<b>Total net assets</b>		<u><u>61,175</u></u>	<u><u>61,593</u></u>
<b>The funds of the Charity</b>			
Unrestricted funds:	15		
General funds		265	201
Designated funds being:			
Property and equipment		4,327	4,368
Continuity		56,583	57,024
<b>Total Charity funds</b>		<u><u>61,175</u></u>	<u><u>61,593</u></u>

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustee and were signed on its behalf on 17 May 2021

M. F. Cunningham  
Director of the Trustee

**DOMINICAN SISTERS (THIRD ORDER) CONGREGATION OF NEWCASTLE NATAL**  
**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020**

Statement of cash flows	Notes	2020 £000	2019 £000
<b>Net cash (used in) operating activities</b>	17	<b>(1,302)</b>	<b>(1,257)</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities:</b>			
Dividends and interest received from investments		1,327	1,744
Proceeds from sale of investments	11	13,975	2,669
Purchase of investments	11	(12,154)	(4,259)
Net investment flow		3,148	154
Proceeds from sale of property and equipment		-	-
Purchase of property and equipment	10	(131)	(354)
<b>Net cash generated/ (absorbed) by investing activities</b>		<b>3,017</b>	<b>( 200)</b>
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period</b>		<b>1,715</b>	<b>(1,457)</b>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period</b>		<b>3,039</b>	<b>4,533</b>
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents due to exchange rate movements</b>		<b>17</b>	<b>( 37)</b>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period</b>	17	<b>4,771</b>	<b>3,039</b>
Cash and cash equivalents consist of:			
Cash at bank and in hand in current assets	17	296	313
Cash at bank held within investments	11	4,475	2,726
		<b>4,771</b>	<b>3,039</b>

There is no net debt

*The notes on pages 19 to 28 form part of these financial statements*

**DOMINICAN SISTERS (THIRD ORDER) CONGREGATION OF NEWCASTLE NATAL**  
**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020**

## **1 Accounting policies**

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are as follows:

### **a) Basis of preparation**

The accounts (financial statements) have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant notes to these accounts. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102 second edition issued in October 2019) and the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011.

The Trust constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

The Trustee considers there are no material uncertainties about the Trust's ability to continue as a going concern. As these financial statements show, the financial consequences of Covid-19 have impacted on the Charity in the year under review, and they continue to do so. The Officers of the Trustee have considered all the matters described in the Trustee's report including the Charity's operations, the impact on voluntary and education income, as well as the impact on the Charity's investment portfolio. In particular, in order to support the assessment of the sustainability of the Charity's activities the Officers of the Trustee have prepared a highly pessimistic scenario of no investment or other income being received other than covenanted UK pensions from sisters of the Congregation. In the Charity's particular circumstances there are no alternative scenarios whether from the impact of Covid-19 or otherwise that can realistically be produced to derive alternative assumptions for budgeted forecasts, most costs being essentially fixed in nature although there have been some savings made in 2020. As at the date of signature of these financial statements this pessimistic forecast indicates that the Charity will be able to maintain liquidity for a period of at least a year (and in fact considerably longer) from the date of signature of these financial statements and will therefore be able to continue to operate as a going concern.

As note 10 below states, in February 2021 a contract was exchanged and completed for sale of a property for £628,000 net of selling costs. The property stood in the books at 31 December 2020 at a written down value of £285,000.

There were no significant judgements or estimates necessary in preparing the financial statements.

The most significant areas of uncertainty that affect the carrying value of assets held by the Trust are the level of investment return and the performance of investment markets (see the investment policy and performance and risk management sections of the Trustee's Report for more information).

### **b) Fund accounting**

There are no restricted funds. Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the Trustee in furtherance of the charitable objectives of the Charity.

Designated funds are funds which the Trustee has decided at its discretion to set aside for particular purposes in the future and form part of the Charity's unrestricted funds. The Trustee has the power to reallocate such funds within unrestricted funds.

All income and expenditure is shown in the Statement of Financial Activities.

### **c) Income**

Income (which includes donations and gain on disposal of fixed assets) is accounted for on a receivable basis as soon as the Charity has entitlement to the income, there is probability of receipt and the amount is quantifiable.

Investment income includes dividends receivable, recognised when the share price goes 'ex-div' which is after a particular company dividend has been declared as payable to shareholders on the register at a particular date.

### **d) Expenditure**

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure has been listed under headings that aggregate all the costs related to that activity.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

Charitable expenditure is comprised of expenditure relating to the direct furtherance of the charitable

**DOMINICAN SISTERS (THIRD ORDER) CONGREGATION OF NEWCASTLE NATAL**  
**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020**

objectives. Where costs cannot be directly attributable they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with use of the resources.

Allocation of expenditure across the different areas of advancing the Charity's main objective, being advancement of the Roman Catholic Religion for Public Benefit, is impracticable. Sisters are engaged in many activities, and each property similarly fulfils different functions.

**e) Allocation of support and governance costs**

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the Charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include back office costs, finance, personnel, payroll and governance costs which support the Trust's charitable work. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities.

Governance costs are those incurred in connection with the management of the Charity's assets, organisational administration and compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements. In the circumstances of the Charity, to include an allocation of the living expenses of the Directors of the Trustee (the Congregation Prioress and her Council) would be of little benefit in comparison with the cost of capturing the information.

The basis on which support and governance costs have been allocated is set out in note 6.

**f) Costs of raising funds**

The costs of raising funds consist of investment management costs.

**g) Operating leases**

The Charity classifies the use of printing equipment as operating leases; the larger equipment was purchased by the Charity but the supplier replaces items when necessary. Rental charges, which in most cases are based on usage, are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

**h) Tangible fixed assets and depreciation**

Freehold land and buildings were included for the first time in 1995 at deemed cost. Acquisitions since are stated at cost. Other tangible fixed assets are stated at cost including any incidental expenses of acquisition. The costs of minor additions to fixed assets, defined as those costing less than £25,000 each are expensed in the year in which they are incurred.

Depreciation is provided to write off the cost of tangible fixed assets by equal annual instalments over their estimated useful lives as follows:

Freehold land	- not depreciated
Freehold buildings	- 10 to 50 years (see following paragraph)
Motor vehicles	- 4 years

With effect from 1 January 2018 freehold buildings are split between the structure and the major components which require periodic replacement, it being impractical to go back further. The costs of replacement or restoration of these components are capitalised and depreciated over the determined average useful economic life on a straight line basis as follows:

Structure and Other	- 50 years
Kitchens	- 10 years
Bathrooms	- 10 years
Windows	- 10 years

**i) Financial instruments**

The Trust only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their fair value.

**j) Fixed asset investments**

The fair value of listed investments is taken as the closing quoted market bid value. There are no unlisted investments.

Certain deposits with banks held for their income earning and monies held by the investment managers pending investment are included in investments.

The main form of financial risk faced by the Charity is that of volatility in equity markets and investment markets due to wider economic conditions, the attitude of investors to investment risk, and changes in sentiment concerning equities and within particular sectors or sub sectors.

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**k) Realised and unrealised gains and losses**

All gains and losses are taken to the Statement of Financial Activities as they arise.

**l) Foreign currencies**

Assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies are translated at the rate of exchange ruling at the balance sheet date. Unless significant, transactions in foreign currencies are recorded at the average rate for the year. All exchange differences are taken to the Statement of Financial Activities.

**m) Liquid resources**

Liquid resources comprise cash at banks and in hand and are available on demand.

**n) Creditors and provisions**

Creditors and provisions are established by consideration of individual unpaid future liabilities existing in respect of the reporting year.

**2 Legal status of the Trust**

The Trust is formally established by a Trust Deed dated 20 January 1953, as varied by the provisions of a Scheme sealed on 4 May 1995, and is a registered charity in England and Wales – Charity Registration No. 233236.

**3 Income**

Income from donations comprises:

	2020	2019
	£000	£000
Covenanted salaries, stipends and pensions from sisters	539	543
Other donations and gifts	10	10
	<u>549</u>	<u>553</u>

Income from charitable activities comprises:

	2020	2019
	£000	£000
Other education income including donations for events of £18,000 (2019: £66,000)	20	71
	<u>20</u>	<u>71</u>

**4 Investment income**

	2020	2019
	£000	£000
Interest receivable	231	264
Dividends receivable	1,086	1,453
	<u>1,317</u>	<u>1,717</u>

All dividends were earned on listed investments.

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**5 Geographical analysis of income and expenditure**

	2020	2019
	£000	£000
Income:		
UK	1,854	2,318
Other	34	25
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	1,888	2,343
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Expenditure:		
UK	1,896	1,991
Other	58	75
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	1,954	2,066
	<hr/>	<hr/>

**6 Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities**

2020	General support	Governance related	Total 2020	Total 2019
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Staff costs total as below	81	13	94	90
Property costs	651	-	651	706
Other community costs	975	-	975	1,062
Professional fees and bank charges	24	-	24	39
Statutory audit fee	-	32	32	30
Other charitable projects	70	-	70	26
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1,801	45	1,846	1,953
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

Basis of apportionment:

Staff cost allocation to governance is based on a reasonable approximation. All other costs are the costs borne. Allocation of expenditure across the different areas of advancing the Charity's main objective is impracticable as sisters and convents are involved in all areas.

2019	General support	Governance related	Total 2019	Total 2018
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Staff costs	77	13	90	85
Property costs	706	-	706	694
Other community costs	1,062	-	1,062	1,010
Professional fees and bank charges	39	-	39	51
Statutory audit fee	-	30	30	34
Other charitable projects	26	-	26	34
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1,910	43	1,953	1,908
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

**DOMINICAN SISTERS (THIRD ORDER) CONGREGATION OF NEWCASTLE NATAL**  
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**7 Staff costs**

	2020	2019
	£000	£000
Wages and salaries	87	83
Social security costs	6	6
Pension costs – defined contributions	1	1
	<u>94</u>	<u>90</u>

The Trustee considers its key management personnel to comprise the Directors of the Trustee (which include the Sister Bursar), the General Bursar and the Finance Manager.

The Directors of the Trustee are the Congregation Prioress and Congregation Councillors. As sisters, their living expenses were borne by the Charity. The Directors of the Trustee received no remuneration or other benefits in connection with their duties for the Trustee or otherwise during the year.

The employee benefits, including employer's contributions, of the General Bursar and the Finance Manager totalled £90,126 (2019: £86,926).

No employee received employee benefits in excess of £60,000 in the year (2019: £60,000 - none).

The average headcount of employees, all of whom were engaged in charitable activities, during the year was 3 (2019: 3). However, they equate to 1 (2019: 1) full time employee.

**8 Net income before other recognised gains and losses**

	2020	2019
	£000	£000
<b>Net income before other recognised gains and losses is stated after charging the following:</b>		
Auditors' remuneration:		
- Statutory audit	32	30
Depreciation	172	163

**9 Related party transactions**

Covenanted salaries and pensions include an aggregate £24,485 (2019: £23,824) received without conditions from sisters treated as related parties. Other than this and the employment contracts with the relevant lay staff there have been no transactions between related parties and the Charity.

**DOMINICAN SISTERS (THIRD ORDER) CONGREGATION OF NEWCASTLE NATAL**  
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**10 Tangible fixed assets**

<b>2020</b>	<b>Freehold land and buildings</b>	<b>Motor vehicles</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Cost</b>			
At 1 January 2020	6,885	158	7,043
Additions	124	7	131
Disposals	-	(13)	( 13)
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 31 December 2020	7,009	152	7,161
<b>Depreciation</b>			
At 1 January 2020	2,533	142	2,675
Charge for the year	166	6	172
Disposals	-	(13)	( 13)
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 31 December 2020	2,699	135	2,834
<b>Net book value</b>			
At 1 January 2020	4,352	16	4,368
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 31 December 2020	4,310	17	4,327
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

All tangible fixed assets relate to direct charitable purposes.

On 31 December 1995 the Trustee included freehold land and buildings at estimated replacement cost using insurance values as a basis and this has been used since then as the deemed cost for the purposes of the financial statements. The current insurance declared value is £12,626,000 (2019: £12,140,000).

**Post Balance Sheet Event**

In February 2021 a contract was exchanged and completed for sale of a property for £628,000 net of selling costs. The net book value of the property at the date of disposal was £285,000.

<b>2019</b>	<b>Freehold land and buildings</b>	<b>Motor vehicles</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Cost</b>			
At 1 January 2019	6,553	160	6,713
Additions	332	22	354
Disposals	-	(24)	( 24)
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 31 December 2019	6,885	158	7,043
<b>Depreciation</b>			
At 1 January 2019	2,378	158	2,536
Charge for the year	155	8	163
Disposals	-	(24)	( 24)
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 31 December 2019	2,533	142	2,675
<b>Net book value</b>			
At 1 January 2019	4,175	2	4,177
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 31 December 2019	4,352	16	4,368
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

**DOMINICAN SISTERS (THIRD ORDER) CONGREGATION OF NEWCASTLE NATAL**  
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**11 Investments**

	2020	2019
	£000	£000
Carrying value (being market value) at 1 January 2020	57,024	50,196
Additions at cost	13,903	4,259
Disposal proceeds	(13,975)	(4,180)
Net investment (losses)/ gains	(369)	6,749
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Carrying value (being market value) at 31 December 2020	56,583	57,024
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Listed investments:</b>		
UK fixed interest	5,610	4,486
UK equity shares	26,604	29,755
Investment trusts	783	1,307
Unit trusts	2,527	2,461
Overseas fixed interest	1,791	2,439
Overseas equity shares	14,793	13,850
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Market value at 31 December 2020	52,108	54,298
<b>Cash at bank held within Investments</b>	4,475	2,726
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Carrying value (being market value) at 31 December 2020	56,583	57,024
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Historical cost at end of year	38,147	39,174
Cumulative unrealised investment gain	18,436	17,850
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Carrying value (being market value) at 31 December 2020	56,583	57,024
	<hr/>	<hr/>

**12 Debtors**

	2020	2019
	£000	£000
Prepayments and accrued income	131	158
	<hr/>	<hr/>

**13 Creditors**

	2020	2019
	£000	£000
<b>Amounts falling due within one year</b>		
Taxation and social security	2	2
Accruals and deferred income	160	268
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	162	270
	<hr/>	<hr/>

**DOMINICAN SISTERS (THIRD ORDER) CONGREGATION OF NEWCASTLE NATAL**  
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**14 Capital commitments**

	2020	2019
	£000	£000
Contracted for but not provided in the accounts	Nil	89

**15 Statement of change in reserves**

2020	Balance brought forward	Transfers	Income	Expenditure	Net investment losses	Foreign exchange differences	Balance carried forward
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Unrestricted income funds</b>							
General funds	201	482	1,888	(1,954)	(369)	17	265
Designated funds							
- Property and equipment	4,368	(41)	-	-	-	-	4,327
- Continuity	57,024	( 441)	-	-	-	-	56,583
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>	61,593	-	1,888	(1,954)	( 369)	17	61,175
<b>2019</b>	<b>Balance brought forward</b>	<b>Transfers</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Net investment gains</b>	<b>Foreign exchange differences</b>	<b>Balance carried forward</b>
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Unrestricted income funds</b>							
General funds	231	(7,019)	2,343	(2,066)	6,749	( 37)	201
Designated funds							
- Property and equipment	4,177	191	-	-	-	-	4,368
- Continuity	50,196	6,828	-	-	-	-	57,024
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>	54,604	-	2,343	(2,066)	6,749	( 37)	61,593

**Designated and undesignated funds:**

The designated Property and equipment fund is established to represent the unrestricted tangible fixed assets of the Charity. It is the same amount as the Fixed assets - Tangible assets in the Balance sheet.

The designated Continuity fund is established to show the extent to which funds are required to be retained to provide the basic financial structure to earn income to meet future expenditure. It is the same amount as the Fixed assets - Investments in the Balance sheet and accordingly includes the cumulative unrealised investment gain.

The undesignated General funds are the same amount as the Net current assets in the Balance sheet.

**Transfers:**

Transfers recorded above are to or from the Property and equipment designated fund and to or from the Continuity fund and from General funds arising in the respective year.

**DOMINICAN SISTERS (THIRD ORDER) CONGREGATION OF NEWCASTLE NATAL**  
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**16 Analysis of net assets between funds**

<b>2020</b>	<b>General funds</b>	<b>Designated funds</b>	<b>Total funds</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Fund balances at 31 December 2020 are represented by:</b>			
Tangible fixed assets	-	4,327	4,327
Investments	-	56,583	56,583
Current assets	427	-	427
Current liabilities	( 162)	-	( 162)
<b>Total net assets</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>60,910</b>	<b>61,175</b>
<b>Unrealised gains included above</b>			
On investment assets	-	18,436	18,436
<b>2019</b>	<b>General funds</b>	<b>Designated funds</b>	<b>Total funds</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Fund balances at 31 December 2019 are represented by:</b>			
Tangible fixed assets	-	4,368	4,368
Investments	-	57,024	57,024
Current assets	471	-	471
Current liabilities	( 270)	-	( 270)
<b>Total net assets</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>61,392</b>	<b>61,593</b>
<b>Unrealised gains included above</b>			
On investment assets	-	17,850	17,850

**17 Cash flow information**

**a) Reconciliation of net (expenditure)/ income to net cash outflow from operating activities**

	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Net (expenditure)/ income for the reporting period	(435)	7,026
Adjustments:		
Loss / (gain) on investments	369	(6,749)
Investment income	(1,317)	(1,717)
Depreciation	172	163
Decrease / (increase)/ in debtors	17	(12)
(Decrease) / increase in creditors	(108)	32
<b>Net cash (outflow) from operating activities</b>	<b>(1,302)</b>	<b>(1,257)</b>

**DOMINICAN SISTERS (THIRD ORDER) CONGREGATION OF NEWCASTLE NATAL**  
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**b) Reconciliation of net cash flow to movement in net funds**

	2020	2019
	£000	£000
Increase/(decrease) in cash in the period	1,715	(1,457)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Movement in net funds in the period	1,715	(1,457)
Foreign exchange translation differences	17	( 37)
Net funds brought forward	3,039	4,533
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Net funds carried forward</b>	<b>4,771</b>	<b>3,039</b>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Being:</b>		
Cash at bank and in hand in current assets	296	313
Cash at bank held within investments	4,475	2,726
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<b>4,771</b>	<b>3,039</b>
	<hr/>	<hr/>

**c) Analysis of net funds**

2020	At 1 January 2020	Cash flow	Foreign exchange differences	At 31 December 2020
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Cash at bank and in hand	3,039	1,715	17	4,771
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
2019	At 1 January 2019	Cash flow	Foreign exchange differences	At 31 December 2019
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Cash at bank and in hand	4,533	(1,457)	( 37)	3,039
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>