

Annual Report 2022
Diocese of Derry and Raphoe MU

Legal and Administrative Information

Dioc. President: Jacqueline Armstrong

Dioc. Secretary: Kathleen Finlay

Peter Clampett: Dioc. Treasurer

Trustees

Jacqueline Armstrong: Dioc. President

Dioc. Secretary: Kathleen Finlay

Kay Clarke: Vice-President

May Boyd: Vice-President

Elsie Stewart: Vice-President

Jean Thompson: Vice-President

Doreen Sidebottom: Unit Co-ordinator F&C

Anne

ordinator A&O

Smith: Unit Co-

Method of Election

Office Bearers within the Dioceses of Derry and Raphoe MU are elected for a term of three years and are eligible for re-election for a second term. Not less than fourteen days before the meeting of the Council nomination papers are sent out to each member of the Council who may nominate one member for the post of President or other Diocesan Official. The nomination papers are returned within a period of time agreed by the Trustee Board to the Finance and Central services Unit Co-ordinator. No name which has received less than three nominations is submitted to the vote. Permission must be sought from a nominee before nomination. On the receipt of the nomination papers by the Finance and Central Services Unit Co-ordinator, a voting paper giving the names of the persons nominated is sent to every member of the Council. Each member of the Council has one vote.

The voting papers are handed to the Finance and Central Services Unit Co-ordinator at the Council meeting and are unsigned. A member of the Council unable to attend the meeting may record their vote by sending their completed and signed voting paper to the Finance and Central Services Unit Co-ordinator before the Council meeting.

All Diocesan Officials are elected by the Diocesan Council and must retire triennially. They shall be ineligible for re-election to the same office, if they have already served two consecutive periods. In the year 1994 and triennially thereafter at the second meeting of the Council held in that year the Diocesan President is elected. In the year 1996, and triennially thereafter, at the first meeting of the Diocesan Council held in that year, the election of all Diocesan Officials, including the Diocesan Secretary is announced and they take up office in January of that year.

Regarding the election of Area Secretaries, nomination and voting papers are prepared by the retiring Area Secretary and copies sent to each Branch Leader, Secretary, Treasurer, Executive Member and Clergy wife (if a member of M U) in her area. Once again, no name which receives less than three nominations can be submitted to the vote and the consent of the nominee must be obtained before nomination.

Main Banker

Mr Peter Clampett, Diocesan Treasurer, Address as above. Banks used for Mothers' Union Diocesan business are the Ulster Bank, Catherine Street, Limavady and the AIB, Main Street, Letterkenny.

Auditor

Mr Gavin Harkin.

Registered with the Charity Commission for NI: NIC100834

UK Inland Revenue No. XR76024

Recognised as a Charity by the Revenue Commissioners: CHY5161

Registered Charity No: 20007331

Aim, Purpose and Objectives of the Mothers' Union

Purpose, Aim and Objects

The Purpose of the Mothers' Union is to be specially concerned with all that strengthens and preserves marriage and Christian family life.

The Aim of the Society is the advancement of the Christian religion in the sphere of marriage and family life. In order to carry out this Aim, its Objects are:

1. To uphold Christ's teaching on the nature of marriage and promote its wider understanding;

2. To encourage parents to bring up their children in the faith and life of the Church;
3. To maintain a worldwide fellowship of Christians united in prayer, worship and service;
4. To promote conditions in society favourable to stable family life and the protection of children;
5. To help those whose family life has met with adversity.

Mission statement of the Mothers' Union

1. The Mothers' Union is an Anglican organisation which promotes the well-being of families world-wide.
2. We achieve this by:
 - (i) developing prayer and spiritual growth in families;
 - (ii) studying and reflecting on family life and its place in society;
 - (iii) resourcing our members to take practical action to improve conditions for families, both nationally and in the communities in which they live.

Diocesan Structure

In keeping with the All-Ireland structure, Derry and Raphoe MU has a Trustee Board and Diocesan Council.

The Trustee Board

The Trustee Board consist of the Diocesan President, the Diocesan Secretary, the Bishop's spouse (if he or she so desires), the four Vice-Presidents and the four Unit Co-ordinators and also the Diocesan Treasurer (non-voting). The Diocesan Chaplain (ex

officio) may attend meetings of the Trustee Board but may not vote. In addition, the Diocesan President has authority to invite an individual to any meeting where expertise is required for a specific task, but they may not vote. The Diocesan President shall have the authority to appoint persons to fill all vacancies created by resignations.

The Trustee Board is the decision-making body in the Diocese. Subject to the approval of the Council, the Trustee Board exercise powers assigned to them by the Diocesan Council. The Trustee Board has the power to form sub-committees. All sub-committees lapse when their function ceases.

The Trustee Board shall meet as may be required but not less than twice annually. The quorum for a meeting of the Trustee Board shall be fifty per cent of the membership plus one.

The Diocesan Council

The Diocesan Council consists of the Diocesan President, the Diocesan Secretary, the Diocesan Treasurer (in attendance but with no voting rights), the Chaplain (ex officio), the four Unit Co-ordinators, the Bishop's Spouse, Unit Representatives, Area Secretaries, the four Vice-Presidents, Branch Leaders, all Past Diocesan Presidents, Branch Secretaries, Branch Treasurers, Representatives on All-Ireland Committees, Representatives on Committees at Mary Sumner House and Any Past All-Ireland President or World Wide President who resides in the Diocese. Clergy spouses who are not office bearers in their Branch may attend Council but may not vote.

The Diocesan Council shall meet at least twice yearly. Forty members constitute a quorum. Not less than fourteen days' written notice of the date of regular meetings is given to members of the Council and copies of the agenda is sent with the notice.

No business is transacted, or motion made at any Council meeting without due notice appearing on the Agenda paper except at the request of the Diocesan President and by consent of two-thirds of the Council present and voting. Every question is settled by a show of hands and every member of Council has one vote. The Chairman has a casting vote in addition to her ordinary vote.

The Diocesan Secretary shall attend all meetings of the Council and keep minutes thereof and generally carry out the business of the Council. The Diocesan Treasurer receives and applies all monies of the Council under such regulations as the Council may make.

The Diocesan President shall be an ex-officio member of all committees.

The Derry and Raphoe MU has four Units each with a Unit Co-ordinator. These are:

- (i) Finance and Central Services
- (ii) Action and Outreach
- (iii) Fundraising and Communications
- (iv) Faith and Policy

There are six Area Secretaries, one for each of the geographical locations within the diocese. These are:

- (i) Derry

- (ii) Donegal
- (iii) Omagh
- (iv) North Sperrin
- (v) South Sperrin
- (vi) Strabane.

The Diocesan President has oversight and responsibility for the outworking of Mothers' Union activities in the Diocese. She is encouraged and supported by four Vice-presidents.

Membership

There are 549 members in the Derry and Raphoe Diocese of the MU. These membership figures reflect the members paid for by our Diocesan Treasurer during the calendar year 2022. The subscription fees collected are £30.00 per member living in the Derry Diocese and €33.00 per member living in the Diocese of Raphoe.

Review of

Diocesan Activities January-December 2021

(Report from Diocesan President)

Derry & Raphoe Mothers' Union

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29:11

'Re-imagining Mothers' Union' came to the fore as branches inched out of covid, reimagining their yearly programmes and branch meetings. The MU 'Re-imagining' Conference in Liverpool and the Britain and Ireland Annual Gathering in Belfast discussed vision, ideas and ideals with the ultimate vision of Mothers' Union moving forward in transformation mode to transform ourselves personally and spiritually, to work in partnership with others to facilitate and support transformation in our churches and communities and, last, but not least, to transform Mothers' Union by being prayerful, openminded and adaptive in order to survive and flourish.

Branches and Diocesan Members were kept up to date with a monthly newsletter, frequent emails, zoom meetings, inperson meetings and information passed on from All-ireland and Mary Sumner House. Each member receive 2 copies of the official MU magazine, *Connected*, and one copy of the Ireland specific magazine.

With 4 million members in 84 countries little acts of love all around the world make the work of Mothers' Union relevant and purposeful. Here, in Derry & Raphoe, alongside the usual neo natal knits, the End of Life team in Letterkenny University Hospital requested matching pairs of hearts that ICU had found very useful during covid. Hats have been gratefully received by the Salvation Army for the homeless, the Mission to Seafarers and our domestic abuse refuges.

A super Ukrainian Teddy project has supplied 120 comfort teddies, complete with their own teddy passport, to Ukrainian preschool children in County Donegal, whilst the remaining teddies are being distributed in Northern Ireland to schools, the Red Cross and the Kiltonga Christian Centre. In the interim the teddies have enjoyed many exciting and adventurous day trips around the diocese!



A third reimagined **AFIA** Scheme now caters for the many not in receipt of benefits who find themselves unexpectedly in extraordinary challenging circumstances due to the **Cost of Living Crisis**. Details of this confidential scheme are available from Elizabeth at drmu.afia@gmail.com.

The fourth Anglican mark of mission aims **to transform unjust structures in society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation**. In this regard the

16

Days 365

Campaign continued to grow with input into the new **Domestic Sexual & Gender Based Violence (DSGBV) Strategies** in both jurisdictions.

In 2022 the first Irish edition of the Restored *Guide For Churches To address Domestic Abuse* was published. Two pilots of a gender justice programme created by Mothers' Union, Bishops' Appeal and Tearfund Ireland, *Equipping the Church to Take Action and End Domestic Abuse*, were very well received and the programme is now ready for roll out to parishes.

During April our first **16 Days 365** event was held in St. Eunan's Cathedral, Raphoe. Interestingly, when Donegal Domestic Violence Services began in 1991 laws did not adequately protect women in domestic abusive situations, yet women who walked away from abuse were regularly rehoused in a three week period. Today this can take up to three years!

As we write MU is gearing up to its 2022 **16 Days of Activism** with branches collecting vouchers and items for Foyle, Omagh and Donegal domestic abuse services. MU is returning to delivering 16 Days Assemblies and workshops to A Level and Leaving Certificate students in our diocese. Our theme call is **'#No More 1 in 3'** referring to the fact that currently worldwide one in three women is affected by gender based violence in their lifetime.

Fellowship, faith, fun and activity were the order of the day as we gathered for our Summer Gatherings in Maghera and Stranorlar, enjoyed a fulfilling and thought provoking Prayer Breakfast with Rev Rosie Diffin, a magnificent Diocesan Festival Evensong in St. Columb's Cathedral and a brilliant day out celebrating all things MU at the *Annual Gathering* in Belfast.

Other highlights include our partnership with Seeds for the **Family Fun Day** in Raphoe. Mary Sumner, who had the original vision for MU, had a wonderful mantra - *our youth of today are our nation of tomorrow*. Encouraging and fostering our children in hope and faith is a tremendous gift to our youth and we look forward to future partnerships with Seeds and DRY.

Worldwide: Our communal understanding of climate change and reality of life in Madagascar was transformed by Anne Speers, in an entertaining and thought provoking presentation. Having experienced so many climate induced disasters, lateral thinking and creativity becomes a part of daily life. Throughout the joy of the people of Madagascar shines through – what a wonderful expression of hope in God.

A wonderful culture, a rich heritage, climate change, poverty and gender based violence came to the fore during two visits post Lambeth. Having spent an evening with Bishop Aimé Joseph and Bénigne in Castlerock and shared a celebratory picnic with Bishop Seth

and Rev Yvette in Glendermott, we were left in awe of the growing faith, hope and resilience of people in Burundi. Here the church is developing quickly – Bishop Seth has 70 parishes and 70 MU Branches with dozens of planted churches. Trees have been transplanted across the diocese and MU step in to prevent abuse and child marriages taking place. As Burundi is not rich in resources, unemployment, even of educated people is a challenge. Mothers' Union groups meet locally every morning to pray, every week to worship and travel long distances to glorify God through worship, prayer and discussion. There is a great longing for women to be valued and for a complete transformation of society through a spiritual revival.

Back in Derry & Raphoe, armed with boots and spades MU celebrated Her late Majesty's **Platinum Jubilee** in style! The last trees to be planted in Brackfield Wood were planted by Mothers' Union, contributing to the Queen's Green Canopy.

In 2023 we look forward to contributing to the Anglican Communion Forest initiative. Trees planted will act as a **symbol of our** commitment to God's creation and our commitment to the Anglican Marks of Mission

The Platinum Jubilee was celebrated with a variety of tea parties and events in the dioceses. Members in the Omagh area celebrated with a walk and a picnic in Baronscourt, whilst Templemore MU stitched a beautiful kneeler to mark the occasion – 68 hours of stitching!

Members created a guard of honour at Helen Livingston's funeral. Helen is remembered as an exceptional Diocesan President (2001-2006) - visionary, practical, pragmatic and a great mentor and encourager. Helen led by example and her deep faith and friendship endeared her to many. During her tenure she worked tirelessly, and it was during this period *Foyle Child Contact Centre* was established. Helen was a light through which the love of God shone. She is much missed, and our thoughts are with David, Clyde and Eleanor.

A few weeks later our late Patron, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II passed away. She had had a long and extraordinary life in which she saw our world change dramatically. Her spirit of acceptance to change and transformation through the years and her ability to take others on the journey of change is testimony to her great strength as a leader and her faith in change that is inevitable.

Rev. Liz Fitzgerald, the Bishop's Curate-in-Charge of the Gweedore group of parishes, was commissioned as Diocesan Chaplain at our Diocesan Festival service held in St. Columb's Cathedral. Here, Bishop Andrew Forster continued to nurture and encourage Mothers' Union members in their ministry:

"Mothers' Union have this incredible history," the Bishop said, "an incredible present and an incredible future, in how they seek to bring transformation into the lives of the poor –

those who are physically, emotionally, economically and spiritually [poor] – and transformation into our world, because we've seen Jesus, because we have seen the Lord, and the grace that he has brought to bear in our lives is something that we're compelled to share. It's Good News."

Our congratulations to branches who have celebrated significant anniversaries – Aghadoey MU and Leckpatrick MU their 80th, Edenderry their 60th and Clondevaddock their 20th. As this triennium ends, we thank our many faithful branch and diocesan volunteers who have led their members and this diocese through extraordinarily challenging covid times.

Throughout they walked forward carrying the banner of Christ's love with kindness, courage, and compassion, diversifying and undertaking outreach initiatives and experimenting with new modes of technology.
May all we are, everything we think, say and do, be blessed by God, constantly renewed and daily transformed through His awesome power and unfailing love.

If you wish to find out more about Mothers' Union or membership of Mothers' Union contact secretarydandrmothersunion@gmail.com

Derry & Raphoe

Numbers of people impacted by MU outreach during 2022

Offering Service to Community:

Family Fun Day	211
Christmas card to Prisoners	200
Nurturing Faith	c.1,000
16 Days Education Outreach	536
Outreach to refugees	c.250
AFIA	170

Crafting:

Community	120
Hospitals	641
Street – Salvation Army	28
Mission to Seafarers	40
DA Refuges	11
Ukrainian Teddy Project	191

Total number of people impacted c.3,390

Jacqueline L. Armstrong
