

catholic nurse newsletter



christmas
2009



Welcome Janet Muchengwa our new National President –After many years of providing invaluable support to the Association of Catholic Nurses as National President Jacquie Hall has retired from her position as President and handed the badge of office over to Janet our newly elected and first African president in the UK at the AGM at St Vincents Centre, Carlisle Place London December 12th .

Jacqui represented the Association of Catholic Nurses at the inauguration of Archbishop Vincent Nichols at Westminster this year and continues to be our member representative to CICIAMS the International Catholic Committee of Nurses and Medico Social Assistants . As National Secretary I continue maintaining the CICIAMS website for the Association of Catholic Nurses England and Wales .



Jacqui Hall receives Holy Communion from Cardinal Brannigan at the recent CICIAMS international Congress in Mexico March 2009. Cardinal Brannigan

has since been succeeded by Cardinal Zimowski as president to the Pontifical Council for Health Pastoral Care- more details on our website.

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CATHOLIC MEDICAL ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE Nora McCarthy, 22 Smallmead,Horley,Surrey,RH6 9AX



Members preparing for the Holy Mile and later Mass at the Chapel of Reconciliation WALSINGHAM 2009

ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC NURSES DIARY DATES FOR 2010

Walsingham Tues. 8th - Wed 9th June 2010
Room Bookings available through Walsingham website www.walsingham.org.uk

AGM Sat. 30th October 11am-4pm 2010
St Vincents Centre Carlisle Place London or Parish Church of the Holy Trinity , Newcastle Under Lyme – venue to be confirmed.

ASSISTED SUICIDE

On 15th December 2009 Keir Starmer QC, the Director of Public Prosecutions, closed his public consultation on guidelines for prosecution in cases of assisted suicide. The new guidance is due to be published March 2010. An article in the Guardian printed to coincide with the closure of the consultation process informs us that the consultation document draws little distinction between a likelihood of prosecution for relatives supporting individuals through assisted suicide travelling abroad to places such as the Dignitas Clinic in Switzerland, which has permitted assisted suicide since 1940, and those choosing to remain in the UK. The document is also reported to go further in making assisted suicide available than Lord Falconer's proposed amendment to the Coroners and Justice Act, rejected by Parliament earlier this year by making less distinction between the availability of assisted suicide for the terminally ill and the disabled. The Association of Catholic Nurses still has its 2004 statement in place that was submitted to the House of Lords Select Committee in response to the Joffe Bill acknowledging the pain and distress experienced by patients and carers in end of life situations, the right to adequate pain relief to relieve distress but that ultimately our care delivery should also be guided by our Christian beliefs that all human life is sacred and that no one has the right to intentionally take life. We congratulate Christine Bentley, who has served us for many years on the Executive as President and Vice President on being appointed Trustee of a hospice local to where she lives and works in Kent because of her interest in this area.

The Association of Catholic Nurses has already expressed its dismay through the Catholic press at the RCN decision to remain neutral on assisted suicide in July 2009 in spite of the fact that the BMA had, in the same month, reaffirmed its 2006 change of stance from neutral to opposing physician assisted suicide because of possible abuse through pressures on the most vulnerable members of our society to accept it. In 2007 we also submitted a response to the RCN expressing our concerns at RCN support of an expansion of nursing involvement with abortion. Most members of our Association are RCN members, some active as local representatives, and whilst we value the support of the RCN on employment rights and legal representation there is a danger if we cannot make our own Catholic and Christian beliefs known and understood when ethical decisions are made about our professional practice.

Nora McCarthy one of our long serving members on the Executive Committee has requested a special mention of the additional concerns recent legislation around mental health must raise through which an independent relative or friend can try to make a decision on behalf of an individual deemed to lack capacity since the implementation of the Mental Capacity Act 2005. The Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards published 2008 and

implemented 2009 reinforce a legal right to remove freedom from somebody deemed to lack capacity but not detained under the sections of the current Mental Health Acts.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

Elearning – a fully online international Certificate in Spirituality, Health and Healing from Cardinal Stritch Franciscan University USA for nurses accessible 24 hours a day 7 days a week but must be completed within 6 weeks. Current conversion price from US dollars is around £91- log on to the Homepage of our website for more details. We have approached Catholic institutions in the UK to see if something could be delivered through a UK Catholic Institution.

Executive Committee on Policy Review - For sometime the members of the Association of Catholic Nurses have had stakeholder involvement on NICE public consultations- I (Mary Farnan) have also had recent individual involvement in an online 3 month consultation process for the Recognising Child Maltreatment document sent out to PCTs and Safeguarding Boards June 2009. We now have a committee set up to try to expand some of our involvements in public policy consultations.

Healthcare Reference Group Jacqui Hall, as President of the Association of Catholic Nurses, has been representing the Association at Healthcare Reference Group Meetings in London. Jacqui, who was awarded the Afghanistan Medal last year has been invited to speak about her experiences of working in the military hospital in Afghanistan at their conference 'Beginnings and Endings' June 24th – 26th 2010 at Hope Hospital, Liverpool

Catholic Medical Association The Guild of Catholic Doctors recently changed its name to the Catholic Medical Association and has moved to Eccleston Square – Nora continues to attend their meetings in London as our representative from the Association of Catholic Nurses

Year For Priests /Year of the Family The Church has designated a Year for Priests June 2009-2010 and our prayers are requested for support for priests in their work and for vocations to the priesthood. Many of us will have sons who have been altar servers, readers or involved in other Church group activities- with an increasing shortage of priests what can parents do better to support vocations.? During the Year of the Family the Natural Family Planning Teachers Association will be raising awareness in Catholic schools of Church teaching on and the health benefits of non invasive natural methods of birth control. The method which requires some discipline for accurate monitoring of fertility during the monthly cycle may be a first choice method or, as many couples now opt for sterilisation after the age of 35, may be an option for those experiencing problems with other methods. Details of courses for additional nurse or midwifery training in NFP are on the Events and Courses page of our website.

With best wishes for a happy and holy new year from us all
Mary Farnan National Secretary