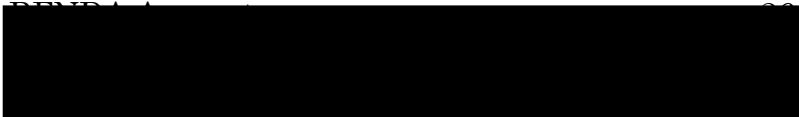


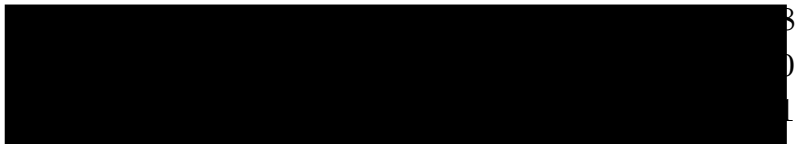
Saint Julie News 2022



**British Federation of Notre
Dame de Namur Associations**

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President's Report



2022 is the 94th year of the British Federation of Notre Dame de Namur Federation. This first year of my presidency has been busy and has flown by. We are still recovering from the terrible time of the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown and our regular meetings, fundraising events and annual conference weekend were all still greatly affected.

We have three new appointments to the BFNDA Executive Committee. Sr Maureen

McKnight will represent the Sisters of Notre Dame. Bernie Shaw will take over the role as Treasurer and Kim Dearden will be the Literary Editor.

We would like to thank Sr Jo Threlfall for the help and guidance that she gave us while she represented the Sisters of Notre Dame. We wish her well and we will miss her. We met the new representative, Sr Maureen McKnight at our meeting in November 2022 in Liverpool. We look forward to our time working together for the Federation.

The contact details of Sr Maureen McKnight, Bernie Shaw and Kim Dearden are listed later in this publication. Although the name and address of the treasurer has changed the bank details remain the same. If you wish to make a payment to the BFNDA bank account would you please advise Bernie Shaw?

I would like to thank Fr Chris Thomas for his help and generosity especially in this last

year. As it was no longer possible for us to hold our meetings at the Notre Dame Convent on Woolton Road in Liverpool. Fr Chris kindly invited us to hold our executive committee meetings at the Irenaeus Centre in Liverpool and this year that is what we have been doing. Fr Chris has also been housing the Notre Dame Archives there too.

At the conference weekend in September at Hinsley Hall in Leeds the delegates attending were welcomed to the AGM of the BFNDA in this the Federation's 94th year.

Special welcome was given to Fr Chris, our chaplain, Sr Pat Sullivan SND, Sr Michael Doyle SND and Sr Mary O'Brian SND. We were delighted to have some of the Notre Dame Sisters here with us. They were all welcome as members of the BFNDA and as we particularly value the Federation's link with the Notre Dame Order.

A warm welcome was given to some of our members who have not attended the conference

weekend before. It was lovely to see them and we hope that they had an enjoyable weekend.

Numbers of members attending our annual conference weekend were still quite a bit lower than we had been used to. Some of our members are still very aware of the presence of Covid-19 and are reluctant to travel or to mix in large groups. We can only hope that confidence will be restored and that we can welcome them back next year.

We have a few members who always attend these weekends but currently have health issues. We missed them all and wished them well and they are in our prayers. May I offer my sympathy and the prayers of the BFNDA to any of our members who have suffered bereavement in the last year? May our departed loved ones rest in peace?

This is the first year that any of us can remember when we did not have any members of the Notre Dame Northampton Association at the conference weekend. Their President

Margaret Bradbury has resigned from the Executive Committee. We would like to thank Margaret for all the time that she spent on the BFNDA executive committee. Her knowledge and experience will be greatly missed. We hope that they are able to send a representative from Northampton to our future meetings. They are a very big part of the Federation and we miss them.

I would like to thank both Bernie Shaw and Chris Wood for their generous time and effort in reforming the Notre Dame Liverpool Association and welcome the new Liverpool representative, Marian Bird. We look forward to meeting more of the Liverpool committee and members at future events.

A new committee has been formed from the Liverpool members and we wish them every success and joy in their new Association. We all know how great it is to have that common bond and to be part of the Notre Dame family.

Sr Mary O'Brian SND, Sr

Michael Doyle SND and Sr Pat Sullivan SND joined us on Saturday afternoon for the AGM and later lead the evening prayers in the chapel.

Sr Mary O'Brian was head teacher of St Julie's Woolton in Liverpool. After finishing there she spent the next 20 years working with other Sisters of Notre Dame in Kenya. She returned to the UK in 2019 and is now a member of the Childwall community. Sr Mary will celebrate her diamond jubilee with four other sisters there this month.

Sr Michael Doyle came home to the UK 15 years ago after spending 37 years as a missionary in Nigeria. She has been at the convent in Woolton Rd Liverpool since her return and will be moving to Birkdale this month.

Sr Pat Sullivan is a long-standing member and good friend of us all at the Federation. She used to be the representative of the Sisters with the Federation. She has spent her religious life in various

schools and parishes including St. Anne's Leeds Primary School, Multicultural Brixton where she was the Parish Sister, the role of pastoral care of the ND Sisters in Parbold, organist at Parbold and Birkdale and is the Ace driver of the Notre Dame Sisters taking them wherever they need to go. She is now living at Childwall.

One of the aims of the BFNDA, to which we all belong, is to support the missions of the Sisters of Notre Dame through prayer, personal effort and financial help. For the last three years 2019-2021 we have been supporting the Sisters of Notre Dame who have been renovating St Norbert Nursery and Primary School in Mgbowo in Nigeria. At the AGM our vice president, Diane Donovan was going to give us an update on the charity in Nigeria. That was already planned and our secretary, Margaret Dolan had mounted the pictures on a display board. We were ready.

I had asked in advance if Sr Michael Doyle would like to

speak to us about her time on the missions in Nigeria. I was told that 'Sr Mike', as she likes to be called, would prefer to stay in the background and would probably not want to stand up and speak. Of course I understood and accepted that. Then at lunchtime, before the AGM, I met her for the first time.

She had spent 37 years on the Notre Dame missions in Nigeria. The charity we had been supporting for the last three years was a school run by the Notre Dame Sisters in Nigeria. I had to ask her again. Nigeria is a huge country but she was a mine of first-hand information of the area. It was too good an opportunity to miss. I certainly did not try to put any pressure on her but she could see that she was amongst Notre Dame friends and she agreed that she would stand up and speak to us for a few minutes.

She told us of the Sisters work in Nigeria, the hardships and the joys, the children and the mothers and the Nigerian sisters who had joined the Notre Dame order. You should have been there to hear her. Those of us who were there were fascinated. Thank you again Sr Michael for your

inspirational talk.

Following the AGM Sr Mary O'Brian led the evening prayers that had been lovingly prepared by Sr Jo Threlfall. The evening prayers are such a special time and one of my favourite parts of the whole weekend. It is a few minutes of quiet reflexion in the beautiful, peaceful chapel before we change for the pre-dinner drinks reception and the conference dinner.

Thank you to both Sr Mary O'Brian for leading the evening prayers and to Sr Pat Sullivan for your help with the mini-biographies. The weekend is so much better when you're there. You are a good friend to the BFNDA.

In June 2023 the BFNDA are planning a 3-day trip to the Notre Dame Heritage Centre in Namur. Namur is where St Julie Billiard and her Sisters developed the mother house of the early congregation of Notre Dame and where it remains to this day. We would stay at the mother house which is next door to the Heritage Centre. I have been in contact with Sr Christianne who now runs the Heritage Centre and she assures us of a good welcome. There has been little interest in this trip so far so if you are

interested in joining the trip to Namur and would like further information please contact me as soon as possible.

I hope and pray that we are slowly recovering now from the awful Covid-19 pandemic. If you are having an event within your associations I would love to join you if you would like to invite me. It would be lovely to hear from any of you so please contact me and send me your news if you have a minute.

I ask St Julie and Notre Dame de Namur to pray for us, our families and the future of the BFNDA.

Lorraine Platt
President
British Federation of Notre
Dame de Namur

<http://bfnda.org/>



ARCHIVES

The Notre Dame archives had been housed for many years in the Notre Dame Convent at Woolton Road in Liverpool but the change in circumstances at the Convent meant that they needed more space and could no longer house the BFNDA archives. The archives had to be moved during the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown and none of the committee were permitted to travel at the time. Fr Chris kindly helped us out and collected the many boxes of archive material and, as a temporary measure, stored them, at the Irenaeus Centre.

When travel restrictions were lifted I made several visits to the Irenaeus Centre in Liverpool together with our secretary, Margaret Dolan and two of the BFNDA Past Presidents, Bernie Shaw and Veronica Miles.

We carefully sifted through the considerable amount of memorabilia, hand-written or typed minutes, letters, articles, manual account books, photographs, conference programmes, menus, travel documents and railway timetables and many copies of the St Julie News. There was quite a lot of duplication. As

Notre Dame Schools or Associations had closed down or members had died their archive material and memorabilia had been added to the Notre Dame archives.

If we had needed reminding that the Federation was in its 94th year the amount of paperwork and memorabilia that we had collected certainly reminded us.

So we sorted it out and reduced the volume of material. We decided what was important and put it in some sort of order.

We are hoping to find a new home for the archive material on Notre Dame Premises and we are currently looking into that possibility. We did consider using a commercial storage unit but we soon dismissed that as it was too expensive and not practical. The archives are currently being stored in a safe, dry but temporary home in Manchester and enquiries are ongoing for their removal to Notre Dame Premises.

Some of the memorabilia from the archives was on display during the conference weekend. There was also a table of photographs, mostly unlabelled. We asked the members present

who wanted any of the items on display from the archives to make a small donation to the charity in the box provided.

Lorraine Platt

Archival photographs taken from the BFNDA website.



Mrs Winifrede de L'Hopitale
The first National President of
BFNDA



Past presidents at the Diamond
Jubilee celebrations in 1988 at
the then Christ's and Notre
Dame College Liverpool.



2000 Liverpool Hope BFNDA
AGM & Conference- 'All the
Presidents'

*Let us go on from day to day leaving the next day
in the hands of the good God .
St Julie Billiart*

BFNDA Charity 2019-2021

St Norbert Nursery and Primary School, Mgbowo, Nigeria

One of the aims of the BFNDA, to which we all belong, is to support the missions of the Sisters of Notre Dame through prayer, personal effort and financial help. For the last three years 2019-2021 we have been supporting the Sisters of Notre Dame who have been renovating St Norbert Nursery and Primary School in Mgbowo.

With the help of you, the members, the BFNDA have donated £13,500.00 in the last three years and Fr Chris Thomas's Aunt Maureen also left a legacy of £4000.00 to the Notre Dame charity. This is how the donated money was spent.

Our vice president, Diane Donovan updated us on the Nigerian school project and we were able to display photographs that we had received showing the progress of the renovation. Sr Edith Eneh SND sent us detailed invoices receipted and signed by their builder Mr Christoph Ozougwu for the materials and local labour showing how our donated money was spent. The total invoice so

far was just below £17,000.00 sterling. They still hold just below £1,000.00 sterling and the work is ongoing and almost completed.

Sr Edith Eneh SNDdeN sent this message of appreciation from Nigeria.

‘Words alone cannot express the joy in our hearts. We, the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur in Nigeria thank you all for your support especially funding the renovation of the classrooms at St Norbert Nursery/Primary School, Mgbowo. May our Good Lord bless us all as we collaborate on the work of uplifting the poor?’

Sr Edith Eneh SNDdeN

Could we ask for anything more? We thanked Sr Edith and all the Notre Dame Sisters in Nigeria and gave them our best wishes for the future of their school

Lorraine Platt



New toilet block under construction.



Doors replaced and painted, New windows..



Children enjoying new floors, tables, chairs **and** a headmistress!

*Stone is shaped, wood is carved, cloth is cut and character must be formed.
St Julie Billiart*

BFNDA Charity 2022 to 2024

Water Purification

The African Well Project in Kitenda, Congo.

I would like to tell you now about the charity that we have chosen to support for the next three years.

For 20 years the sisters of Notre Dame have dreamed, planned and talked about a project which would change everything. Life with or without water does change everything. The African Photovoltaic Project (APP) produces electricity, purifies water and provides internet technology and has provided access to secure water in 16 countries in Africa in the last 20 years.

Water is presenting a global challenge for survival. The challenges come from both rising sea levels and raging floods but in the Congo the water issue is the LACK of water. They need to dig deep to secure access to the deep water under the soil. The project we are supporting is in Kitenda Congo. The sisters and workmen have worked hard to complete the first part of the

project which has been completed and activated.

The first part was providing one spout for water with piping, pumps and filters powered by solar energy to purify the water which comes under the soil from the river.

There is always more to do. Sr Lorraine Connell has been in contact with the engineer and the details of the future project which is very detailed and expensive. They want to develop and install a water supply for community access and to community members, women, children and families living in poverty. They would welcome our participation. I am in touch with Sr Leonore Coan SND by e-mail.

Lorraine Platt



The local community in Kitendo making the most of the water pipe. Improvement work is still underway.

*My God, what
thanksgiving can
repay so many
blessings!
St Julie Billiart*

Website details for further information on our current charity

<https://suddengw.org/category/african-photovoltaic-project/>

St Julie Article

A copy of an article published in the French Newspaper La Croix was sent to us by Mellissa Metcalf (Moirra Metcalf's sister). It has been translated into English by Diane Donovan.

It is a detailed article about St Julie's early life from the time of her birth in 1751 to her meeting, after the French

Revolution, with Françoise Blin de Bourdon and their plan to create a religious order to educate poor children, particularly girls. St Julie died in 1816 and was canonised in 1969.

Today the Sisters of Notre Dame number over 2000 on four continents.

Lorraine Platt

Conference Secretary Report

This was my first year as Conference Secretary and I'll admit I didn't know quite what I'd taken on. Previous BFNDA Conferences that I'd been to were organised by Lorraine and she really is a hard act to follow. Having said that she was always there to answer any questions I had and to offer invaluable advice.

Bookings came in slowly, as so many of us were still concerned about Covid or were still catching up on events they had missed over the last couple of years. Suddenly Conference was almost upon us and there was a last minute rush to get every-thing done.

On Friday 2nd September car fully loaded up with my many boxes I set off for Hinsley Hall meeting up with other members of the executive committee for a working lunch before our delegates began to arrive at around 2pm. Our final number of delegates was much lower than pre-covid and we missed seeing familiar faces, but we did have five ladies for whom it was their first conference. This gives me hope that numbers will increase in 2023.

It was wonderful to be able to welcome everyone to Conference and catch up with people. Our programme was similar to that of previous years. Once people were settled in their rooms, having popped in to visit Bernie's stall, have a look at the memorabilia that Lorraine had brought from the achieves and maybe tried their luck on the tombola, it was time for Pilates. After our gentle workout it was time for dinner which was followed by an evening of parlour games, quizzes and general hilarity. Thanks for that Lorraine.

Saturday morning breakfast was followed by our drive to Ilkley, the weather was perfect, the coach didn't get lost or stuck and we arrived back at Hinsley Hall in time to welcome ladies who were joining us for lunch before the AGM.

On Saturday evening we had our Conference Dinner followed by an interesting and amusing after dinner talk from our guest speaker Sr Maura. Meeghan, Sisters of St Mary.

Sunday morning we gathered after breakfast for our group photographs. After our photo

shoot we drew the raffle, I don't think many people didn't get a prize. Thank you to everyone who donated a prize. This was followed by Mass in Hinsley Hall's beautiful Chapel. A special thanks to Fr Chris Thomas for not only saying Mass for us but for being with us for the weekend. Thanks also to Sheila who played the organ to accompany our hymns.

Then it was lunch, thank you



and goodbyes and my first time organising Conference was over.

As in previous years we had been well fed and well looked after by the staff at Hinsley Hall. I had enjoyed my weekend and hope that everyone else did too. Thank you to all the people who sent me messages or cards.

Catherine Orford



Conference Member Review

When we eventually arrived at Hinsley Hall, (not helped by a temperamental satnav, road number changes). We were very surprised to find such pleasant accommodation in lovely grounds so close to Leeds city centre. Although the rooms first allocated to us had

not been made ready we were quickly given alternatives and after this inauspicious start the weekend really improved. We were warmly welcomed and after unpacking and enjoying a cuppa from the "kitchenette" we went for a walk around the grounds after which we

returned indoors and were encouraged to join in a gentle Pilates session led by Lorraine. This was followed by a quick shower and change for dinner.

After dinner we tried the 'dingbats' quiz (decided we don't have 'dingbats' minds), then, a first for us, 'aerobics' pass the parcel. We obviously hadn't got conference stamina so retired early to bed.

Saturday morning with the weather better than forecast we enjoyed the coach trip to Ilkley, returning back to Hinsley Hall for lunch. We then relaxed until the well conducted AGM on Saturday afternoon. We loved having the chance to meet the officers of the Notre Dame Federation and three Notre Dame Sisters. It was most interesting listening to Sister Michael's experiences on the Notre Dame missions in Nigeria. In the evening we enjoyed drinks in the lounge followed by an excellent conference dinner after which a very entertaining after-dinner talk was given by guest speaker Sister Moira Meeghan.

We forgive her for being Sister of St. Mary rather than of Notre Dame.

On Sunday, the weather which had been good all weekend changed, so we all gathered inside for the group photograph. Following Mass and lunch it was time to say our farewells. We thoroughly enjoyed our first conference, in fact, our first time at any Notre Dame Association meeting at all. We would like to thank all of the organisers and everyone else who looked out for us, ensured we were included in everything and made us feel very welcome.

One thing that did surprise us was that we hadn't sung the school song but after asking others from Liverpool and Southwark we realised there isn't a generic Notre Dame school song. Being at conference has reminded us once more of words spoken by Sister Marie Therese, headmistress at Notre Dame, Manchester. At our final assembly for girls leaving school Sr Marie Therese said that her greatest pleasure

and joy came not from the academic success of pupils who had been under her care, but rather the knowledge that many beautiful friendships were formed at school, friendships that would endure a lifetime. She asked us to

treasure and love our friends and trust in God always. Our happy and joyful time at Hinsley Hall that we have experienced shows that her words are still so true.

**Patricia Rhodes
Christine Schofield**



*The good God will not leave us on the road
without giving us light
and grace to guide us.
St Julie Billiart*

Battersea Association Report

We, last members of BOND, have not met up since the start of Covid. There are only a few of us left, all aging.

So, I shall write about recent thoughts. My four sisters and I all went to Notre Dame High School and we all went to the attached St Mary's Infants and Juniors school run by the Notre Dame sisters in the convent of our Grammar school.

Recently, my next sister down sent me a copy of a book with examples of 11+ questions. We were both teachers when working, she in primary while I taught secondary students. We were not so much impressed by our ability at the ages of 10-11 to answer such questions as by the education that provided us with that ability.

I have learned since of the experiences of others who did not attend a Catholic school, who were taught by teachers who showed no interest in whether they passed or not. My personal feelings about the 11+ exam is that a child's future was decided on their performance on one day.

The 11+ was divisive and gave little option for future progress in many cases. However, it was the system at that time. The Notre Dame sisters believed in education for all children. It was their dedication to this that my sister and I felt such gratitude for.

The first class I remember shortly after beginning school was music. We had just learnt the length of notes, looking at the board and chanting, 'Ta-te, ta-te, tafatety-ta,' when Sr Joan came in with a boiled sweet for everyone saying it was in celebration of our first music lesson. The war having not long ended, sweets on ration, a boiled sweet was a treat indeed!

A couple of us have joined with Southwark Old Notre Damians because our school has closed. The same love of and respect for education is apparent, the same love for school, too. Thank you, St Julie for the world wide benefits for the young that you initiated.

Mary Sibtain (Nee Donaghey)

Direct Members' Association Report

Since taking on the role of the convenor I have sent the St Julie News 2021 by post to all direct members and dealt with the incoming member's subs and charity donations, sending receipts via e-mail or letter.

Bernie Shaw assisted with transferring 8 members over to the Liverpool Association.

Sadly, Sister Margaret Mary Dudley SND from the Southport Convent and Sheila Fuller, former Conference

Secretary, passed away. I have sent sympathy cards. In May, there was a well-attended Mass at Our Lady of Grace in Prestwich, Manchester for deceased members followed by afternoon tea and get-together. An afternoon tea was also enjoyed by some of our members at the Midland Hotel, Manchester.

I have received some lovely messages of support from direct members for which I am very grateful.

Helen Zamojskyj

Liverpool Association Report

The Liverpool group held a meeting on the 20th November at the Ireneus Centre in Crosby. We had difficulty getting members to come this time but did manage to have twenty eight in attendance. It began at eleven o'clock with tea or coffee and was followed by Mass at twelve. Mass was said by Father Chris.

We followed this with a substantial afternoon tea, enjoyed by all. Following a raffle later in the day the meeting broke up between 3.30 to 4.00pm.

Our meeting in May was well attended. Perhaps next time we meet we should offer a meal as we did in May.

Angela Swift

Manchester Association Report

We had our May Mass and AGM on May 14th at Our Lady of Grace Church in Prestwich. The Mass was lovely and the singing from our past pupils was, as usual, wonderful. We have a number of parishioners attend our Masses because they find the celebration so joyful. We followed the Mass with a social in the Parish Hall. It was around the date of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee so the tables were decorated accordingly and we raised our glasses for the loyal toast with our Prosecco. We sang Jerusalem and 3 verses with descant, of God Save the Queen as we always did on Speech Night at school. We were entertained afterwards with singing and games and a splendid raffle. A good time was had by all. Profits from the event were sent to the Ukranian Disaster Fund at the British Red Cross.

In June we attended After-

noon Tea at The Midland Hotel in Manchester City Centre. The hotel is an iconic landmark building. Built in the Victorian style, it is where Rolls met Royce before they built their famous car. It has been recently refurbished and was a fitting venue for our get together. 25 ex pupils and staff attended and enjoyed the atmosphere, the food and the good company.

The Notre Dame conference and AGM at Hinsley Hall in Leeds, was organised at the beginning of September and was well attended by a contingent from Manchester. It is a great opportunity to meet with members of the Notre Dame Association from other parts of the country and to share stories about our respective schools. It was good to welcome a delegate from the newly reformed Liverpool Association and hopefully we will welcome more Liverpool

delegates next year. We held our Mass for deceased members and their families in November at St Anne's Church in Crumpsall. It was well attended and we were joined by more new members. As this was after the sad death of Queen Elizabeth, It was the first time that we were able to sing, 'God Save the King', in unison. Again a great afternoon together as the Mass was followed by a social event in the parish hall.

We have a Manchester Facebook page that now has 621 members. It's very lively and has been the source of past pupils meeting up again and attending our events. It is also especially supportive of

those experiencing life's difficulties. Many prayers are said and answered for those who request them. As we no longer have a school in Manchester, it's a good way for us to stay in touch.

We have a wonderful Manchester group and we are very grateful to the many members who help us to organise these events. Without them we would not exist. We also are aware of the wonderful heritage we have from our time at Notre Dame and take great pride in the work began by St Julie and the Sisters of Notre Dame. How Good is the Good God.

Margaret Dolan

*Don't dwell on the difficulties;
the good God is there to help you.
Show God your good will.
St Julie Billiart*

Northampton Association Report

Northampton celebrated a return to as near normality as could be hoped for with an amazing AGM and Lunch held, as previously, in April. 80 of the 126 members were able to attend and the excited chattering of old school friends, who had not met up over the previous 2 years, made for a delightful day, bolstered by fine weather. We had returned to the Freemason's conference facilities and the newly purpose built premises were ideal for our purpose and the three course meal was appreciated by all. We booked for 2023 before we left!

Despite attempts to resume our normal social events held throughout the year – previously held in March, June, September and December - this has proved impossible. With only 6 members plus the committee attending it is not financially viable for the long term. We canvassed members in our last newsletters on their wishes for future social events, etc. The committee now needs to collate and discuss the responses received. We are aware that due to age, infirmity and

mobility issues it is difficult for many of our older members to attend these events. A problem which will only become exacerbated by time. Nobody gets any younger!

Although we have been ‘up-keeping’ the cemetery of the Sisters, which we had refurbished, on a monthly basis – weeding, litter picking and cleaning of information boards and the white crosses marking each grave - we arrived in July to find that the locks on the gates have been changed and we no longer have access. We do have to stress that the cemetery is the property of Northampton Borough Council and so, despite our best efforts, it is now out of our hands. We understand that the Northampton Association is not, at this stage, going to grow but we hope and pray that, for those of us who are able to continue as members, the work of the Sisters and the kudos that the school had in the town will be remembered for many years to come.

Margaret Bradbury

Southwark Association Report

Once again, this year has proved to be uneventful for SNDA. The committee has met sporadically throughout the year, and we had been keen to get back to our normal programme of celebrating St. Julie's Day combined with our AGM. We had also been hopeful of perhaps a theatre outing or afternoon tea but sadly that was not what happened.

Despite arrangements being made for St. Julie's Day we had to make a decision about the viability of the event and regrettably the decision to cancel was made. It seemed that the worry of Covid still cast a shadow and our members, understandably were reluctant to commit to attending.

However, we are hoping that next year will see us embracing fresh vigour and enthusiasm and arrangements are well in hand for St. Julie's Day to be celebrated on Sunday May 21st at Notre Dame School, Southwark. Full details will be made available to members in the first quarter of 2023 and we are looking forward to welcoming back our members and

hopefully some new friends as well. In addition, we are already exploring some new ideas for other events and news of these will be available early 2023.

In past years SNDA have dedicated a Saturday in November to remembering those that are sadly no longer with us, be they past members of the association, past pupils and staff members from the school and dear friends of SNDA. Our November Mass for the Deceased was the central focus of our attention, but it too has become a victim of Covid as St Georges Cathedral in Southwark no longer celebrates a Saturday lunchtime Mass. However, we are aware how much the Mass is missed, and the committee members are actively exploring options to celebrate Mass in an alternative venue that our members will be able to access. Just to reassure you ladies that we haven't forgotten about lunch, and we are trying to find somewhere suitable to gather after Mass to enjoy a warming lunch.

So, 2022 is definitely not our best year but we look forward to 2023 and to seeing our members enjoying the company of their old friends and maybe making some new ones as well.

In closing, I would just like to thank the members of the committee who have attended our Zoom meetings with good humour and have been so

helpful and encouraging to one another. I also thank the BFN-DA Executive Committee for keeping the associations informed and supported throughout these last difficult years.

With all best wishes to you all for the year ahead.

Patricia White

Web Manager's Report

Owing to unfortunate circumstances, I am still acting as web manager. I had hoped to complete one more addition to the potted histories of UK schools with the addition of Notre Dame Oxford. This is still not completed mainly because I haven't any photographs to include.

The website continues to attract a few queries. Often these relate to schools still active, and I pass them on to the appropriate Association. I did however, receive a query from a lady in Canada, a

former pupil of Birkdale Notre Dame. She was interested in what had happened to various Sisters. Sr Mary O'Brien was able to help me with these queries.

The Association Events section requires updating and for this I need the assistance of the Association Secretaries. At the moment, I am researching how to maintain the privacy of personal details of the Federation officers and those of the Associations.

Mary Lewis

*Courageous souls are needed for
the services of the good God.
Sr. Julie Billiart*

A Word from the Editor

At the beginning of November I answered an appeal and volunteered to take over the Literary Editor role from Louise Enderby. I have never done anything like this before but being about to give up working, I wanted to take on a challenge. I can say it has certainly been that. I had the pleasure of meeting Louise in person and would like to thank her for giving me some helpful advice. I would also like to thank Lorraine Platt for her guidance on Federation protocol and both Lorraine and my daughter for their support and help with proof-reading numerous versions I made prior to this one.

Paper and printing costs have

risen dramatically over the last couple of years. With this in mind I have spent a considerable amount of time fine tuning the layout in order to reduce the amount of pages to both save money and help the environment. However, this was in vain. I hope you like the new layout and I will take on board any constructive feedback in preparation for next years publication.

Going forward I am interested in hearing stories from our members on their experiences of events held within the different regions and I will be especially delighted to receive photographs and accounts of renewed friendships.

Kim Dearden

*Be like the sunflower that follows every
movement of the sun and keep your eyes
always turned towards our God.
St Julie Billiart.*

BFNDA CONFERENCE 2023

Friday 1st to Sunday 3rd September

95th Birthday Celebration

We hope you've all got next year's date in your diaries. It will be 95 years since the establishment of the Federation and I'd like to make it a special one but for that to happen we need to have more people there. When it was the 90th anniversary we had Hinsley Hall fully booked.

If you've been to Conference before please come back and join us again and if you've

never been please consider making 2023 your first time.

Everyone is assured a very warm welcome and it's a great opportunity to spend time with people who share our Notre Dame experience.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Catherine Orford



News from The Irenaeus Centre

As you know from other St Julie's news, during the two and a half years of lockdown things weren't quiet at Irenaeus. As well as teaching sessions and spiritual accompaniment taking place via Zoom, we have been preparing for the opening of the Irenaeus centre in the buildings of the now closed parish of St Thomas of Canterbury. We have worked with contractors, decorators, plumbers and surveyors until finally on Sunday 11th September we were ready to open our doors.

It was wonderful to see people coming into our building with their mouths open and eyes wide with delight as they looked around. We listened as people shared words like 'beautiful' and 'breath-taking.' One woman said 'this should be a model for what can be done with church buildings.'

The afternoon began with

Mass and a letter from the Arch-bishop who was unable to be with us, was read out. He immediately showed his support and encouragement for Irenaeus when he wrote,

'At the time of much change in the Church and in society at large the need for the Irenaeus project becomes more necessary.'

During Mass I shared that I think Pope Francis is trying to free us from being a stale bureaucratic institution obsessed with power and control and numbers, and property, rules, regulations, and move us towards being a spirit led church that talks more about mercy than sin, a church that is as Pope Francis says: is a field hospital for sinners, not a museum of saints.

That's what we hope the Irenaeus centre will become. Yes, a place where people who want to, can come and pray

and reflect and discover a God of ultimate mercy and compassion, but also a place where those who have experienced alienation and those to whom life has dealt a rough hand can come and be met with that same mercy and compassion.'

So our doors open from 10 till 4 Monday to Thursday. There is space to pray in our oratory. There is space to sit and be and have conversations and there is space to meet and have courses and experiences. During Advent one of our volunteers led a beautiful reflection each week after the knit and natter group. There will be more of those during Lent as well as quiet weekends and Scripture courses. Practically our food cupboard is

widely used by those in need and many people have already made their way to us with huge needs and all are met with compassion, love and a listening ear.

If you're in Liverpool and find yourself anywhere near Waterloo, come and see what we have done.

Father Chris Thomas
Chaplain for the BFNDA



www.irenaeus.co.uk

*The glory of God is a person
fully alive.*

The Irenaeus Project

The National Board of Catholic Women

Conference at Ushaw

Women at the Periphery taking Centre Stage

The aim of the weekend was for women to walk together on the Synodal path to connect, support and share knowledge with one another. In recognition of the UN women's 16 days of action against domestic abuse (25th November to 10 December) we were given an orange flower badge to wear for the duration of the conference.

The conference began on Friday evening with an opening address from the President Margaret Clark in which she reminded us of the work of many inspirational women including St Winifred of Holywell, Catherine of Siena, Mary Ward, Pauline Jaricot and Jeanne Bigard (to name a few) who have helped to shape our world thus far.

Dr Pat Jones of the Centre for Catholic Studies at Durham University then gave a power-

fully enlightening and thought provoking talk about her research into prostitution. She explained her methods of engaging with women through pictures and how the responses she received highlighted the similarities between the hopes and fears of all women regardless of class or culture: that we may have similar thoughts but for different reasons, and these certainly resonated with everyone in the room. A case was made for not using the terminology of "sex worker" as this advocates an acceptance of a trade that is mostly brought about through circumstance rather than choice. It was argued that it is the task for society to protect women against all forms of violence and abuse and to achieve this we need to engage in an Abolitionist view to end prostitution.

There was opportunity for connecting with each other and sharing our views over supper

and a much needed glass of wine before retiring to our very cold rooms. The coldness of the venue was the main talking point at breakfast the following morning. It has to be said that the staff at Ushaw could not do enough for us to rectify the heating issues.

Saturday comprised a jam packed programme of speakers. Due to the national rail strikes causing travel issues, some were pre-recorded and a couple had to be cancelled. I tried to take as many notes as I could so that I could give you a brief insight into the topics covered. Now writing them up I find it hard to give justice to how moving, thought provoking and uplifting the day actually was. I have decided not to print my views here but if anyone is interested in my thoughts on the days speakers, please feel free to email me and I will send you edited highlights.

The day concluded with Mass in the magnificent St Cuthbert's

Chapel with Abbot Hugh presiding. In his address he talked about the Emmaus Walk, silence being as important as talk and the importance of being able to really listen to each other. This struck a chord with me as it is something I am personally striving to improve.

This was followed by a drinks reception and a delicious three course meal in the Great Hall. It was lovely to be among so many people from varied backgrounds.

Afterwards, many of us took advantage of a guided tour of Ushaw led by Christine Brennan who was brilliant at informing us of the history of the many buildings and answering all our questions with great enthusiasm and delight.

Sunday Morning came around all too quickly and I realised I was too late for early morning prayers. I joined the group at breakfast prior to attending the days meeting where there was opportunity for us to gather in groups and discuss the

weekends talks and the implications for the future of the National Catholic Women's Board. After reconvening to share viewpoints it emerged that the majority were in agreement that for the Board to move forward there need to be changes in the roles undertaken by women in the church and more emphasis given to encouraging young women to join by

listening to their views, sharing our skills and putting into action our ideas for the future.

I thoroughly enjoyed the weekend and I would like to thank Diane Donovan for giving me the opportunity to attend in her absence.

Kim Dearden
On behalf of Diane Donovan

<https://www.nbcw.co.uk/>



Introduction to Notre Dame Federation

I attended my first Notre Dame Federation Meeting at the Irenaeus Centre, Liverpool on Tuesday, 1st November. It was a very enjoyable and interesting meeting for me. During it, Lorraine Platt, (President) asked me to write a piece for the newsletter by way of introduction. My name is Maureen McKnight and I am the new 'link' Sister of Notre Dame to the Federation. I was surprised and delighted to be asked to do this by our Provincial Team.

Unlike many of the Federation members, I didn't meet the Sisters of Notre Dame till I went to Notre Dame College in Dowanhill, Glasgow. It was after I graduated from there in 1968 that I entered with the Sisters in Birkdale, Southport. That is where I am currently based. I have just finished a three-year term as assistant moderator there, so I sometimes feel I have come full circle!

I have spent most of my 54 years in Notre Dame in England, mainly in education at various levels. Though I'm told I still have a strong Scottish accent.

Over the years, I have heard frequently of the work of the Federation, but this is my first opportunity to experience it 'face-to face.' I very much look forward to meeting more of you, especially at the annual Conference and AGM. I particularly look forward to learning more about your activities. I know many of the Sisters in this Province and beyond are inspired by and grateful for the amazing fundraising efforts you undertake for Notre Dame charities. I believe it is yet another way in which the charism of Saint Julie is carried forward. Thank you. God is good!

Sr.Maureen McKnight, SND

*A simple soul is affectionate and attentive
to the needs of others.
St Julie Billiart*

RIP

2021-2022

Direct Members

Sheila Fuller

Manchester

Mary Ready

Winifred Corrigan

Margaret Meehan

Valerie Goodwin

Patricia Jones (snr)

Barbara Fry

Winifred Rylance

Josie Nickson

Josie Leigh

Pat Everett nee Belsford

Rebecca Brooke

Eternal rest grant unto them,
O Lord and let perpetual light
shine upon them.

May they rest in peace. Amen



Northampton

Frances Warr

Catherine Huckell

Jill Kennelly nee Dean (Joined Prep school 1947)

Sheila Manton nee Lambert

Elsie Beirne nee Chapman (Joined school 1944)

Jo Ferriday taught English 1966-1972

Southwark

Miss Doris Little (Home Economics Teacher)

Sisters of Notre Dame

Sr Edith Brash

Sr Margaret Mary Dudley

Sr Frances Connochie

Sr Therese Joyce Heywood

Sr Marie Therese O'Toole

Sr Alice Garrity

Sr May Shandley

Sr Ellen Gielty

Sr Josephine Bushell

Sr Anthony Wilson

Sister Ellen Gielty SND

The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur mourn the death of Sr. Ellen Gielty SND who died on Saturday 3 September 2022. Sr. Ellen served the Congregation as General Moderator from 1990 to 2002. We will always remember Sr. Ellen for her pioneer spirit, her excellence as an educator and leader, her global vision, and her love for our charism and heritage. Sr. Ellen's legacy is rich, including serving as one of the founding Sisters in Nigeria in 1963, working to attain NGO status at the United Nations for our Congregation, and envisioning our Heritage Centre.

Before moving to Rome in 1990 Ellen taught in ND High Schools in Glasgow and Wigan, served as assistant Principal at Notre Dame Teacher Training College, Downhill, Glasgow, Head Teacher at Notre Dame High School, Sheffield and was an early member of the education group at Upholland Northern Institute.

Ellen spent the the last twelve years of her life in Birkdale where she contributed to the life and liturgy of the community. We extend our prayerful sympathy to them and to Sr. Ellen's family.

May St. Julie, Françoise and our Sisters welcome her, and may she rest now in the peace of Christ.

Sr Ellen's funeral took place on 21st September 2022 at Our Lady and All Saints Church, Parbold.

Sr Margaret Walsh SND

*Every day of our lives, ask the Blessed Virgin Mary,
our loving Mother to protect us.
St Julie Billiart*



HERITAGE CENTRE

LES SOEURS DE NOTRE - DAME DE NAMUR

SISTERS OF NOTRE DAME DE NAMUR



Making known God's goodness

Join us on a 3 day trip to the Notre Dame Heritage Centre, Namur, in June 2023

We will stay at the mother house, next door to the Heritage Centre, developed by St. Julie Billiart and her Sisters.

Interested and would like further information?

Please contact Lorraine Platt.

The African Well Project in Kitenda, Congo.

Website details for further information on our current charity

<https://sddengw.org/category/african-photovoltaic-project/>

**British Federation of
Notre Dame de Namur**

<http://bfnda.org/>



The Irenaeus Project

<https://www.irenaeus.co.uk/>



The National Board of Catholic Women

<https://www.nbcw.co.uk/>



Annual Conference 2023

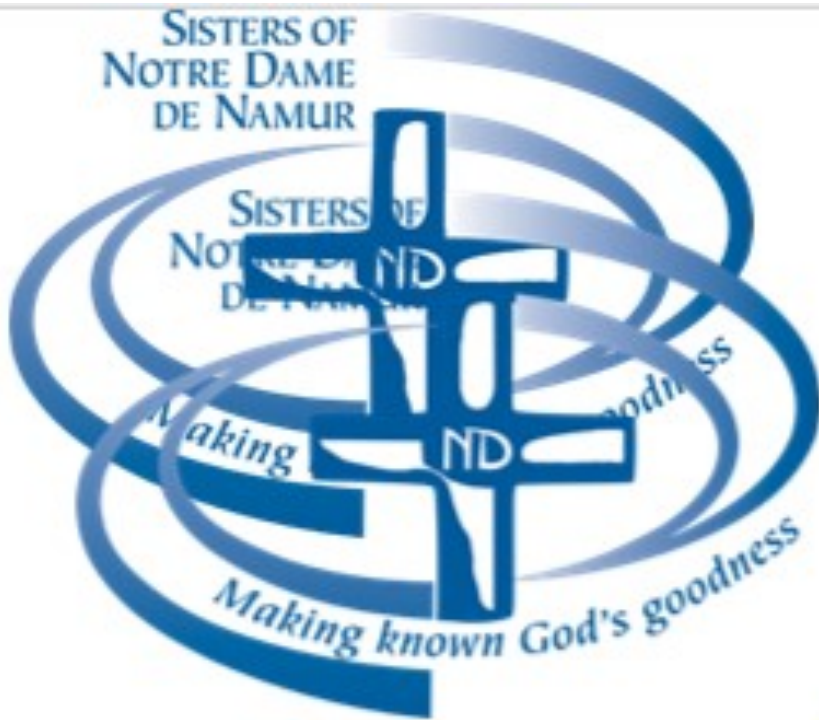
Hinsley Hall, Leeds

Friday 1st to Sunday 3rd September

Join us as we celebrate the Federations 95th Birthday.



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*The more difficult the times are,
the more we must expect and hope
everything from the goodness of the good God.*

St Julie Billiart