

Happy Easter to you.



*Neither height nor depth,
nor anything in all creation
will be able to separate us
from the love of God
that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Romans 8:39

Progress in becoming a dementia friendly Diocese

We had the first meeting of the [Working Party](#) last month, to start developing a Diocesan Action Plan. It is good to know we are not starting from scratch as we reviewed some of the key activities already taking place in parishes to make our Diocese more dementia friendly. The monthly Memory Mass at St John Mary Vianney, Memory Cafes planned in both Wakefield and Halifax Deaneries as well as hundreds of people [becoming a Dementia Friend](#) by attending a short session for parish groups were all mentioned. The first part of our Action Plan is already underway as we have invited each Deanery to arrange a short Dementia Friends information Session. If you are not a Dementia Friend yet, then look out for a session near you.



Dementia Friends at St Theresa of the Child Jesus, Queensbury

"I need you to be the Christ-light for me, to affirm my identity and walk beside me. I may not be able to affirm you, to remember who you are or whether you visited me. But you have brought Christ to me."

[Christine Bryden](#), who describes herself as a dementia survivor

Simple ways your parish can help

Your parish has a huge role to play in helping people live well with dementia, and to support carers.



Book a 45 minute Dementia Friends session in your parish to help everyone learn more about dementia and the small ways we can all help people to live well with the condition. Contact Rachel on 07702 255142 or email growing.old.gracefully@dioceseofleeds.org.uk for more information or to [book a session](#).



Invite people to create a Spiritual Reminiscence Box for themselves, or someone close to them with dementia. Wrexham Diocese have produced a simple A5 pack of information to guide people through the process of putting together a memory box that reflects our spiritual life. It gives ideas for items that could be included to stimulate each of the five senses and also includes a CD of many of the most familiar hymns. You can read more about this [here](#) or order it [here](#).

Later life friendly parishes

It is our hope and our prayer that our parishes are not only dementia friendly but also are later life friendly. With this in mind we have produced a guide called "[Welcoming Older People – ideas for and from parishes](#)" – to support parishes in this Diocese and beyond in cherishing the blessings of ageing and helping to overcome its challenges. This 88 page guide is full of ideas to inspire practical actions that support the growth of later life friendly parishes. Every topic we consider focuses on "What your parish can do" in a variety of areas including:

- Vocation in Later Life
- Being Mortal
- Bereavement & Loss
- Tackling Loneliness
- Caring for Carers.

We still have printed copies available which can be ordered from Rachel on 07702 255142 or by emailing growing.old.gracefully@dioceseofleeds.org.uk .



What next for Growing Old Grace-fully?

Our work for the past three years, in raising awareness of the contribution of older people in our parishes and helping to respond to their spiritual and practical needs, has been possible because of a generous gift from The Society of the Sacred Heart. As our funding finishes at the end of this year, we are taking the opportunity to think about where we should focus our efforts from 2019 onwards. [Please help us by taking 3 minutes to answer a few simple questions](#) about how your parish welcomes older people.

We also ask you to hold our work and future direction in your prayers.

Warmest thanks for your interest in and support of our work across the Diocese.

Pippa Bonner, Trustee

Carol Burns, Chair

Anne Forbes, Trustee

Paul Grafton, Trustee

Maria Longfellow, Trustee

Cath Mahoney, Trustee

Mgr Peter Rosser, Trustee

Rachel Walker, Project Worker

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