

CCC – 2014

CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME TO THE 24th ANNUAL CATHOLIC CHARITY CONFERENCE

Welcome to the 24th conference; we have just a few house-keeping notices to start with:

Fire: PowerPoint slides are – or have been – on the screens behind me and I hope they are self explanatory.

Hard of Hearing: Those who are hard of hearing should have been offered a suitable piece of kit to clip to your belt – if you know someone who is finding it difficult to hear me, do please ask at Reception.

Mobiles: Could you possibly turn these off now – and that includes iPhones, iPads, Blackberries and anything else that makes an unwarranted noise.

Special Diets: If you need a special diet please do ask Richard Greenaway at coffee time.

Email Addresses: Please kindly complete the contact details form (please include your email address) and feedback form in your packs and hand to a member of the team on reception.

Lunch: As last year we are lunching in two separate rooms, the Hoare Memorial Hall (where you had coffee) and the Harvey Goodwin Suite. If your badge is **Blue, please go to the Hoare Memorial Hall** and **Green means you are lunching in the Harvey Goodwin Suite.**

To minimise food queues could you take your seats – wherever you want there is no seating plan – and wait to be called up by your table hosts from the sponsoring firms whose job it is to ensure that you have sufficient food and drink.

Programme: Well, whether you are here for the 1st or the 24th time, welcome to the Catholic Charity Conference. We remain intent on producing topics that are relevant to you but I hope also that you will enjoy the chat over coffee and lunch, including an ability to talk to the sponsoring professionals here without being charged a fee!

Theme:

The theme of this year's conference is not so much a theme, more a question – “Beyond the Horizon – What really lies ahead?”. Well in all honesty, we haven't a clue but we have hired 3 Prophets – certainly younger than that great poet Isaiah but maybe no less perceptive – who under the guidance of Pip Jukes have agreed to stick their necks out and suggest what your charities and your missions may be facing.

Shortly before this conference last year we experienced the real joy of the election of Pope Francis. Few could have predicted that, though about 6 months beforehand Robert Mickens, the Vatican correspondent of the Tablet, did predict a future “implosion in the Vatican”, so it is possible to read the signs.

Just look at what Papa Francesco says in *Evangelii Gaudium* – exhorting us to recognise the joy of the Gospel and not to live our lives as “Lent without Easter”. Earlier this month he said in relation to the welcome offered to all people by Christianity that if aliens came to him and asked for baptism, he would baptise aliens – “yes”, he said, “even Martians – green with long noses link in children's drawings”. He is taking the Church on our renewed mission and I think we are all being challenged by the Spirit.

Programme

It is in this context that we are presenting our programme today:

Session 1: looks at the future for Catholic charities and the missions of the religious institutes which have set up so many of these charities. Our speakers will rely on their undoubted experience and guesswork to forecast ten years ahead to 2024. As Pip Jukes says, a crystal ball may also be useful!

Session 2: After coffee some other professionals, also with undoubted experience, will attempt to answer the questions posed by Session 1, in particular “What to do next?”

Session 3: The lunch will be as convivial as usual and then we come back here to listen to someone who deals with one of the certainties in life – DEATH.

We are very lucky to have with us Dr Anjali Mullick, a palliative care consultant at the famous St Joseph’s Hospice Hackney, founded 110 years ago by the Religious Sisters of Charity.

Session 4: We turn to strategies for coping with the needs of sick and elderly members of Catholic institutions, including the organisation and funding of care and extra care, and trying to deal with the “next of kin” problem through living wills.

Guest Sponsor:

We are very pleased this year to have as our guest sponsor Investec Wealth & Investment Limited. This is the first time that they have sponsored this conference but they are rightly well known to many of you as major players in the field of charity investment management.

We have very much enjoyed working with our friends at Investec in preparing this year’s programme and we have certainly benefitted from their involvement. I would ask you to visit their stand here in the Synod Room and to talk to them – you will find them very understanding of your needs.

Prayer: Mindful of our spiritual natures, let us now call on the Almighty through one of his representatives on earth, Sister Margaret Herlihy of Poor Servants of the Mother of God.

Michel King