



Some notes on the ikon:

The **crown** on St. Diphna's head indicates that she was a princess, Celtic according to tradition.

The **lilies** indicate that she was a female martyr. The **blue book** represents her commitment to a life as a female anchorite.

The **sword** is the instrument of her martyrdom.

The chained **little green devil**, of course, represents insanity, which in medieval times was thought to be the product of demonic possession.

*Thanks to Joel & Lynn Sax whose blog can be found on the web at:*

*<http://paxnortona.notfrisco2.com/?p=3467>.*

*See p8 where there is his touching tale of him buying this ikon.*

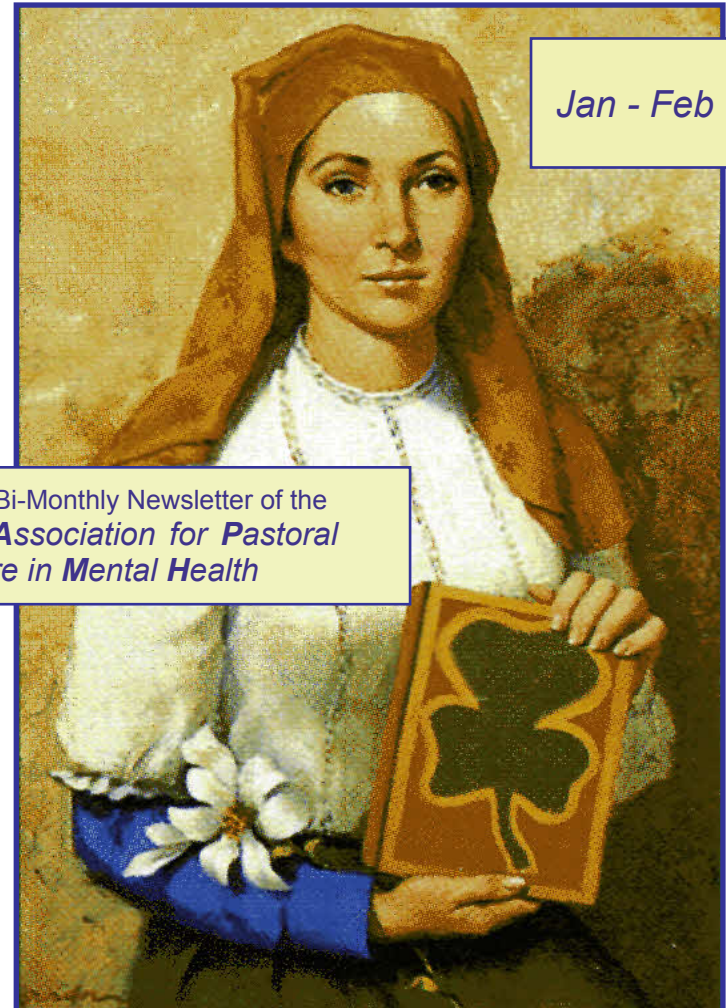
*Ed: Thanks, moreover, to Jean Marsham's Front Page which set off an enchanting journey of mouse clicking discovery....*



# Being Alongside

Jan - Feb 08

the Bi-Monthly Newsletter of the  
**Association for Pastoral  
Care in Mental Health**



Who's this? Dymphna, Dympna, Dimpa or Diphna?

*see inside*

## The Barnabas Drop-In Sessions

*'Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means Son of Encouragement)' Acts 4:36*

St. Paul's Community Project in partnership with APCMH

**Mondays 2pm - 5pm**

November First Aid

Plus various activities: Table tennis, dominoes, scrabble, art / craft, poetry reading, tea / sandwiches / cakes and chat.

**Wednesday 10am - 12pm**

A more reflective discussion time with tea and biscuits, an opportunity to all share concerns or to receive one-to-one support (by appointment).

Free. All Welcome.

Venue: St Paul's Church Centre, 3 Rossmore Rd, NW1  
(5 mins walk from Marylebone Station; buses 139 & 189 stop outside)

call: Captain Mark Dadds, or Sister Theresa: 0207 724 8517

*'When he arrived and saw the wonderful things God was doing, he was filled with excitement & joy, and encouraged the believers to stay close to The Lord whatever the cost. Barnabas was a kindly person, full of the Holy Spirit & strong in faith. As a result large numbers of people were added to the Lord. (Acts 11:19-24)*

## Mental Health Support Group

*(The Dymphna Group)*

St Andrew's, Frognal, United Reformed Church NW3

2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of each month

**10.15am-12noon**

*Aiming to provide friendship and mutual support for those living with mental health concerns, both sufferers and carers, where matters may be explored and discussion encouraged.*

contact: The Revd Jonathan Dean: 0207 435 5725  
or Jean Marsham: 0208 455 1240

Junction of Frognal Lane / West End Lane / Finchley Road.

near Finchley Rd Met / Jub;  
113, 82, 13, 46, 268, 328, 139, C11 (West End Green);  
Finchley Rd / Frognal (NL Metro),  
Hampstead (Northern);  
West Hampstead (First Capital Direct)



## The Who and What of APCMH

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*APCMH is a Christian based, voluntary association of individual members and affiliated groups who recognise the importance of spiritual values and support in mental health. It has a network of supporters throughout the United Kingdom and it welcomes and encourages people whatever their own faith or belief system.*

*Governed by its National Committee, APCMH is primarily concerned to promote and encourage "being alongside" people experiencing mental or emotional distress.*

*For Specific Contacts, see above; for General Enquiries reach us:*

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The views expressed in *Being Alongside* are  
not necessarily those of the Association.

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# Poem: Dignity

Mary  
Joseph  
baby Jesus

the Holy Family  
a Bible story

Kentish Town  
Barclays cashpoint

a beggar  
his girlfriend  
a pound coin

humiliation

*John Wetherall*

John writes of this poem:

*This poem was written about five years ago in quite a bitter mood.*

*Perhaps in part it was written out of guilt, as I spent a number of years on the streets as a beggar myself, yet now that I have a bank account, a home and a cash card, I rarely give to beggars.*

*In my experience, there is a surprising amount of genuine compassion among the clergy towards homeless beggars. The church as a physical building was always a place where I felt more accepted than in the shopping streets and residential areas where material possessions seemed to be all that mattered. The goodness and compassion that Christians purport to uphold are not entirely fictitious. But I suppose this poem was an expression of the feeling that they were.*

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## Front Page

### ***There is life after diagnosis*** by Jean Marsham

After I fell out of my tree in 1984 my psychiatrist revealed to me a diagnosis of manic depression (now politically correctly known as bipolar disorder). I can remember thinking 'Oh no!' because my mother had cared for a lady with the same disease and the memories of this had lodged in my mind so vividly, that all I could envisage was a future in which I would be very much out of control.

My illness came about gradually and culminated in a psychotic breakdown. I believed that I had contracted a fatal disease in which my arms and legs would drop off and that this was God's punishment. In desperation, one day I shook my fist at God, went out, bought a bottle of dry-fly sherry, left a suicide note – in rhyme, overdosed and waited in a black refuse bag for the inevitable.

I was a single mother with two girls aged eight and ten whom I thought I had also infected. I wrote a letter to my doctor asking him to put them to sleep because I couldn't lift a hand to them myself. As the combination of alcohol & pills quietened my mind, I had a moment of clarity and I thought 'I can't let my children come home from school to witness their mother waiting for her arms and legs to drop off' and rang for help.

What led to these events you must be wondering? Stress mainly, messy divorce proceedings after my husbands compulsive gambling had drained the finances, trying to cope as a single mother without maintenance and not being able to ask for help. As the stress mounted so did the bills and after this breakdown, I spent seven weeks in a psychiatric hospital having good meals, recuperating and recharging whilst all my problems and responsibilities were taken away. I was discharged 7 weeks later – fit as a flea!

Six years later I started studying for a degree in sociology at Sussex University. I was working full-time and studying and again the strain of overwork was beginning to take its toll. I completed my studies in 1993 – then in my late 40's and it was a challenging time trying to find a job in the

## Evelyn Sumption

*who died 19 August 2007*

For nearly twenty years Evelyn Sumption was a very active member of the APCMH Forest Hill Branch in SE London, both as a volunteer and as a member of the Committee. She was also Chair of the Branch for six years and represented the Branch on the national APCMH committee.

Evelyn first became involved with Forest Hill APCMH in 1987 after attending a meeting to test public support for a local branch of APCMH. Encouraged by the support shown, a small group decided to form a committee and needless to say Evelyn was on it. It was a great help to new comers like myself to have someone so enthusiastic and knowledgeable about mental health issues on the committee and later Evelyn was right behind the decision to start a Drop In Centre.

Over the years Evelyn continued to play a key role in the Forest Hill Branch. Volunteers remember her not only at the club but also on the outings where she joined in with great enthusiasm. At Hengrave Hall during one weekend away with the Club, volunteers remember her helping in the kitchen, joining in long walks and sharing a dormitory with the rest of the girls - Evelyn didn't let age get in her way!

For many years she was a distinctive figure coming to the Centre every week on her bike, in sunshine or rain and at Christmas she never failed to turn up at the Centre without a large and delicious home-made cake. Her knowledge of not only of mental health issues but also politics and current affairs was wide. She read her paper every day and her letters to the press, local councillors and MP about the things she felt passionately about were many. Some were 5 pages long!

Evelyn was certainly a very special person who will be missed by clients and volunteers not only as a valuable volunteer, but also as someone who felt passionately about justice and fair play for those with mental health needs. She will also be remembered by many of us at the Centre as someone who became a friend over the years. We will all miss her and remember her with affection and gratitude for all she gave to the Forest Hill Branch.

Thank you Evelyn.

*Gail Cotton*

[www.carersuk.org/Newsandcampaigns/CarersRightsDay](http://www.carersuk.org/Newsandcampaigns/CarersRightsDay) for how you can get involved.

### **EVENTS AND INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

**Moving People:** Carers and service users needed as involvement workers  
Calling all carers and service users who would like to improve the lives of everyone affected by severe mental illness recover a better quality of life by becoming involved in the work of Rethink's Mental Health Promotion Department and the Moving People programme that aims to fight stigma and discrimination experienced by those with mental health problems, and to improve health and well being. Involvement workers are needed to form a group of expert co-facilitators who will take part in mental health promotion projects. Participants need a commitment to the project and will receive training and reimbursement for time and travel expenses. If you're interested, please contact Jo Loughran on 020 7330 9122 or email [mentalhealthpromotion@rethink.org](mailto:mentalhealthpromotion@rethink.org) to request an application pack. See [www.movingpeople.org.uk/involvement/index.html](http://www.movingpeople.org.uk/involvement/index.html) for more information.

### **Carers' stories**

We are always looking for stories of your experiences of caring for someone with mental illness. This is a popular section of the Mental Health Care site and visitors often say reading about other peoples' stories has helped them through their own experiences. If you'd like to submit a story to us, visit

[www.mentalhealthcare.org.uk/carersstories/?id=115](http://www.mentalhealthcare.org.uk/carersstories/?id=115)

for some examples of published stories and information on how to send yours in. We offer a small fee for those accepted for publication.

### **Mental Health Care**

Mental Health Care is an information and research news website developed by the Institute of Psychiatry, King's College London, the South London and Maudsley NHS Trust and the mental health charity Rethink. The website is aimed at the friends, relatives and carers of anyone with a mental illness.

### **Want to get more involved?**

We are looking to build up a core group of members to consult on taking forward the development of the Mental Health Care web site - we'd like to find out how useful you find the site, other things you'd like to see and how we can communicate with you better. If you are interested in getting more involved, do email [sarah.gentleman@iop.kcl.ac.uk](mailto:sarah.gentleman@iop.kcl.ac.uk) for more information.

difficult climate. I had a second breakdown and this time spent 3 weeks in hospital, my daughters were teenagers by now.

Soon after, with both of my daughters at university, I began travelling to London more frequently to visit my mother who was suffering with Alzheimer's. I fell behind on the mortgage repayments and became dispossessed, arriving in London with no more than a rucksack filled with essentials. The most sensible thing to do seemed to be to live with my mother.

Eighteen months later I had a major stroke and was to spend the following six months in hospital. I would witness the new millennium from my hospital bed. Having been informed that I might never walk or talk again, one evening I prayed to God to let me die. That night there was a movement in my head and the following morning I spoke my first word, which ironically was 'Yes'. That was the start of my recovery.

I would say 'yes' to anything whether I wanted it or not as it was the only word I could pronounce – I could think the word 'no' but could only say 'yes'. One of my regular visitors used to say 'Is that 'yes, yes or yes, no'? Eventually speech and movement returned and I'm walking again unaided. I suffer with aphasia – a condition of memory loss which occurs whilst searching for an appropriate word but I let others fill in the .....

Now I'm eating well, I have sufficient money and a sympathetic doctor – I keep my medication at hand in case I should ever require it. Most importantly, I feel that God is now on my side. So there's my little miracle. I lived briefly in a hostel before I was given a council flat a year later. My mother died three months after my discharge from hospital.

In 2000 I had a brief flirtation with the Unitarian Church before returning to Christianity and discovering my present spiritual home at St Andrew's United Reformed Church, Frognal. Within a year I was baptised and have recently become an elder, a position for which I am becoming suitably equipped.

The Revd Jonathan Dean at St Andrew's approached me some time ago when he became concerned about one of the people known to the church who was experiencing paranoia; she starved herself to death believing that her food was being poisoned. Jon thought I might be able to help but this was sadly not the case. This episode led to my involvement with APCMH.

I started to attend the Mental Health Support Group groups both at St Paul's Rossmore Rd and St Marylebone Church. I had the idea to form a

new group, which would have its own dynamic & develop its uniqueness from those whom it would attract.

The Revd Jon was immediately enthused and the Elders agreed. We became affiliated with APCMH and decided to hold the 'The Dymphna Group' (so named after the patron saint of 'lunatics and epileptics') once a fortnight – second and fourth Friday mornings, which would alternate with St Marylebone who have theirs on the first and third Fridays. Sue kindly comes to serve us tea, coffee, biscuits and the group usually takes the form of exploratory discussion, looking at the ordinary in extraordinary ways and vice versa.

I have always believed that one size *doesn't* fit all and that one has to address each community's and individual's many diversities. One person may find writing poetry a great help whereas another may recognise the need to write poetry as a symptom of becoming unwell – not that we write poetry but the metaphor simply goes to highlight our many different needs. The regular members look forward to the group and there is an atmosphere of trust and acceptance. It is reassuring to feel that God is using me as an instrument to enable all this to happen.

We are so fortunate to have Deirdre King as facilitator, she has a creative instinct and a gentle understanding way with which people feel at ease & can engage. We are blessed to have her. Over the past few years the stigma surrounding mental illness has dissipated somewhat thanks to charities like the Mental Health Foundation who are constantly working to disseminate positive mental health education. The likes of Stephen Fry have been hugely instrumental in reaching a wider audience, in filtering out misconceptions and throwing positive light on the many aspects of bi-polar and related diseases. I now refer to my condition as 'Stephenfryitis'.

I agreed to write this article because so often a diagnosis is seen as a death knell to any future ambitions instead of being the beginning of something potentially good. My group has its own motto: 'Glad to be.....' And you can fill in the blank with anything that you choose.

*Jean Marsham*

*Please see front & back covers for representations of St Dymphna, p5 for a prayer, p6 for some bio & p8 for the touching story of the modern ikon's purchase.*

## Mental Health Care e-newsletter November 2007

*Only brief snatches - with web addresses - can be included here of this amazing newsletter available via e-mail. Those activists who are web savvy, please have a look & subscribe. It's free & full of cutting edge developments.*

This is an e-newsletter aimed at carers, families and friends of people with mental health problems, updating you on the latest research published by the Institute of Psychiatry, King's College London, key stories from the national press, and a range of opportunities for you to get involved in mental health care research, from taking part in research projects to attending events and getting your voice heard. We hope you find this e-newsletter useful, any feedback is much appreciated, please email [sarah.gentleman@iop.kcl.ac.uk](mailto:sarah.gentleman@iop.kcl.ac.uk) with any comments, suggestions or send us your contributions for future editions.

### LATEST RESEARCH NEWS

We produce summaries of the latest research, hot off the press from the Institute of Psychiatry, visit [www.mentalhealthcare.org.uk/research/?id=11](http://www.mentalhealthcare.org.uk/research/?id=11).

### IN THE NEWS

We keep an eye on the national press and information from UK mental health organisations and update our news page on a daily basis, see more at [www.mentalhealthcare.org.uk/news/?id=63&date=7](http://www.mentalhealthcare.org.uk/news/?id=63&date=7)

### TAKE PART IN RESEARCH

This is a selection of research studies currently looking for volunteers at the Institute of Psychiatry. More opportunities to get involved are at [www.mentalhealthcare.org.uk/researchvolunteer/?id=160](http://www.mentalhealthcare.org.uk/researchvolunteer/?id=160)

### CAMPAIGNS

Carers Rights Day 2007

Friday 7 December is Carers UK's 'Carers Rights Day 2007', to raise awareness of the needs of carers, increase take up of benefits and to make sure carers know their rights, see (web address next page):

## Poems from Sue Holt

### **Spring Water**

Dry weary bones, parched, thirsty  
whilst all around water shimmers  
cruelly mocking my soul  
which desires refreshment from a higher source  
my very core requesting an outpouring  
to salve my spirit  
In response to my prayers  
a deluge, showering me in clear spring waters  
bringing forth purity, cleansing my mind, evoking healing.

### **Angel in Social Worker's Robes**

My tears issue a cry of despair one as yet unheard, except by you  
you listened to my need for your loving touch, which I had resisted once again.  
An angel came to salve my pain issuing words of wisdom  
she comforted me in my hour of need enabling me to relinquish my tortured mind  
delivered into your sacred hands, to be healed, forgiven  
to become tutored in the understanding, of the mind of Christ.

### **Boulders**

His love descends upon my shoulders  
lifting canvas sacks of boulders  
I have carried so long.  
His love carries those canvas bags  
of boulders I dutifully carried for so long  
my responsibility, to do so I believed.  
His love carries those boulders  
to new fertile ground, to plant in rows  
ploughed by His sure hand.  
Over time with His careful tending  
those boulders, change renew  
the drag they once had upon my shoulders  
lifts my spirit, once concealed  
under a mountain of rocks.

*Sue Holt*

## Prayer via Saint Dymphna

Lord Jesus Christ, You have willed that Saint Dymphna should be invoked by thousands of Your believers as the patroness of nervous and mental diseases. You have brought about that her interest in these patients should be an inspiration to and an ideal of charity at her great shrine and around the world. Grant that, through the prayers of this youthful martyr of purity, those who suffer from nervous and mental illness everywhere on earth may be helped and consoled. I recommend to You in particular...(here mention those you wish to pray for)

Be pleased to hear the prayers of Saint Dymphna and of Your Blessed Mother. Give the sick and afflicted the consolation they need and especially the cure they so desire, if it be Your will. O God, through Saint Dymphna, grant relief to those who suffer from mental afflictions and nervous disorders.

Through Christ our Lord, Amen.

## Groups Who'll Help

### **Frognal (Dimpner) Group**

meets 10am-12pm 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Friday each Month  
St Andrews UR Church junction of Frognal Lane & Finchley Road NW3  
Underground: Finchley Road or Frognal NLmetro, Hamstead, W. Hamstead  
Buses: 113, 82, 13, 46, 268, 328, 139, c11  
Tel: Rev John Dean: 0207 435 7920, or Jean Marsham 0208 4551240

### **St Marylebone's Group**

10.45-12.15 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of every month  
17 Marylebone Road (opposite side to Madam Tussards)  
Buses: 18, 205, 30, 27  
Tel: Chris MacKenna 0207 935 5066

### **St Paul's Church Centre**

Monday 2-5pm & Wed 10am-12noon  
3 Rossmore Road London NW1  
nearest underground Baker Street or Marylebone  
Buses: 139, 189  
Tel: Mark or Theresa: 0207 724 8517

## St. Dymphna

*(also known as Dympna, Diphna and Dimpna).*

*Virgin and martyr. The earliest historical account of the veneration of St. Dymphna dates from mid thirteenth century. Under Bishop Guy I of Cambrai (1238-47), Pierre, a canon of the church of Saint Aubert at Cambrai, wrote a "Vita" of the saint, from which we learn that she had been venerated for many years in a church at Gheel (province of Antwerp, Belgium), which was devoted to her. The author expressly states that he has drawn his biography from oral tradition.*

*According to the narrative, Dymphna -- the daughter of a pagan king of Ireland -- became a Christian and was secretly baptized. After the death of her mother, who was of extraordinary beauty, her father desired to marry his own daughter, who was just as beautiful, but she fled with the priest Gerebernus and landed at Antwerp. Thence they went to the village of Gheel, where there was a chapel of St. Martin, beside which they took up their abode. The messengers of her father however, discovered their whereabouts; the father betook himself thither and renewed his offer. Seeing that all was in vain, he commanded his servants to slay the priest, while he himself struck off the head of his daughter. The corpses were put in sarcophagi and entombed in a cave where they were found later. The body of St. Dymphna was buried in the church of Gheel, and the bones of St. Gerebernus were transferred to Kanten.*

*This narrative is without any historical foundation, being merely a variation of the story of the king who wanted to marry his own daughter, a motif which appears frequently in popular legends. Hence we can conclude nothing from it as to the history of St. Dymphna and the time in which she lived. That she is identical with St. Damhnat of Ireland cannot be proved. There are at Gheel fragments of two simple ancient sarcophagi in which tradition says the bodies of Dymphna and Gerebernus were found. There is also a quadrangular brick, said to have been found in one of the*

## What's In a Name?

Do you find the initials 'APCMH' a mouthful?

Do you sometimes forget the letters before you reach the end?

When asked what the letters 'APCMH' stand for, do you have a 'heart sink moment'?

If so, you'll be pleased to learn the National Committee are wondering if you would like to suggest a new name for the organisation. If you have a view as to if we should re-name ourselves and if so, what that new name might be, please write in to, or e-mail, the Editor: addresses inside the back cover.

## Lovely Grub!

A stand on Nutrition for Mental Health at Guildford Farnham Road. Hospital stressed the close links between Food and Mood.

The fact that the brain is unable to store food or oxygen means they have to be received from the one and a half pints of blood that flow through it every minute.

The brain is composed of 80% water.

60% of its dry weight is made of fats.

The role of oils Omega 3, 6 and 9 can play in maintaining the brain and growth of its cells is now well established.

Apart from taking supplements, oils are found in flax and sunflower seeds, sardines, tuna, eggs, walnuts and sesame seeds.

Lack of vitamins B and C, folic acid and the minerals magnesium and zinc are linked sometimes to depression, psychosis, poor memory amongst other mental health problems.

In summary:

food supporters include water, vegetables and fruit, oil rich fish, nuts and seeds, whole grain food, protein, fibre and organic food.

In one survey 88% of people said changing their diet improved their mental health significantly.

*Fenella Denning*



## And Richard Came Too!

I had been invited to represent APCMH and lead two afternoon workshops on establishing a befriending service. Volunteer Mental Health Support Development Worker, Roberta Canning, had encountered the Association earlier in the year and had been impressed by what she found. As many of you may know, the Merton branch has been running a one-to-one befriending service for about 16 years; so it was felt appropriate that a branch member might be the right person to represent the Association.

There were about 50 at the conference; most of them lay, from all over the country. In the morning, a long-standing friend of APCMH, Julia Head (from the chaplaincy at the South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust) led the opening session, which established a safe environment in which painful issues and experiences could be and were explored. Some attendees had encountered mental distress themselves or within their families and spoke movingly. Service users (a term which a number of us publicly challenged) and carers spoke powerfully of their own experiences and the varied reactions they had encountered at the hands of their faith communities. Sadly, Christian parishes reflect the prejudiced attitudes of wider society to those living with mental distress.

Varied workshops were built around spirituality, pastoral care and mental health. The level of engagement was high and the depth of understanding impressive. I felt I was working with committed people who walk beside those isolated through mental illness, and willing to share in their journeys. We worked our way through the preparation, practicalities and subsequent maintenance and support is essential for a successful befriending scheme. The Association's fact sheets formed the basis, enhanced by my own experience of the Merton branch's work.

Encouragingly, many felt that faith group involvement in mental health issues could be a vehicle for ecumenical working, breaking down the barriers between denominations as a symbol of breaking down barriers to understanding the issues of mental health. I can only hope the clergy (including one bishop) who attended, heard what their flocks were saying.

This was a thoroughly well organised day, with high quality contributions from all parts of the mental health experience. Those who set up the day have produced a leaflet to be distributed in all Roman Catholic parishes in England and Wales. APCMH is an agency to which readers are channelled. Life at APCMH may get just a little busier...

*Richard Allen*

*sarcophagi, bearing two lines of letters read as DYPNA. The discovery of this sarcophagus with the corpse and the brick was perhaps the origin of the veneration. In Christian art St. Dymphna is depicted with a sword in her hand and a fettered devil at her feet. Her feast is celebrated 15 May, under which date she is also found in the Roman martyrology.*

*From time immemorial, the saint was invoked as patroness against insanity. The Bollandists have published numerous accounts of miraculous cures, especially between 1604 and 1668. As a result, there has long been a colony for lunatics at Gheel; even now there are sometimes as many as fifteen hundred whose relatives invoke St. Dymphna for their cure. The insane are treated in a peculiar manner; it is only in the beginning that they are placed in an institution for observation; later they are given shelter in the homes of the inhabitants, take part in their agricultural labours, and are treated very kindly. They are watched without being conscious of it. The treatment produces good results. The old church of St. Dymphna in Gheel was destroyed by fire in 1489. The new church was consecrated in 1532 and is still standing. Every year on the feast of the saint and on the Tuesday after Pentecost numerous pilgrims visit her shrine. In Gheel there is also a fraternity under her name.*

*Raided from a www article:*

*<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/05221b.htm>*

*Written by J.P. Kirsch. Transcribed by Paul T. Crowley.*

*As included in The Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume V. Published 1909.*

*New York: Robert Appleton Company. Nihil Obstat, May 1, 1909. Remy Lafort, Censor. Imprimatur. +John M. Farley, Archbishop of New York*

*www.pastoral.org.uk*

## *Ikonik Story*

*Here's Joel Sax's story - from his blog - of how he procured the ikon pictured on the back cover.*

St. Andrew's Abbey in Valyermo (California) specializes in doe-eyed ceramics of angels and saints.

A large awning downhill from God's Court and the stage where the sacred dancers pirouetted Bible stories and psalms. Stacked on tables were the flat wall hangings that one of the fathers made to help support the contemplative life of his peers. We found St. Diphna next to Dorothy Day, a good augury Lynn and I thought.

There were only two figures left. I lifted one carefully. The helper shrugged her shoulders as I lightly gushed my praise of the votive figure. Either she had no idea who St. Diphna was or she distrusted anyone who would seek her aid. I paid and took the figure to where the artist himself signed the holy objects. I thanked him for making this figure available. He grunted, so I made way to the wrapping area.

The wrappers received tips, so they competed for our attention. From among the bored teenagers, I chose a Latina to wrap the relic because she seemed more adept at the task than the males who slouched in their chairs and picked at their shirts just over their navels.

"Who is this?" she asked as I handed her St. Diphna.

"St. Diphna," I replied.

"What's she patron of?"

"She helps about 2% of the American population," I said.

"Which two percent?" she asked.

I smiled and pointed to the chained little green devil in the lower right hand corner. "Isn't that great? I like him." I smiled as she followed my fingertip. "St. Diphna helps the two percent of all Americans who have little green devils chattering in their ears."

Her mouth had already been open, so I can't say that it fell. She looked at me and then at Lynn. "Which one was it?" her eyes asked. Who had the little chattering devils? She never found out from us. I accepted the wrapped saint and left her a dollar.

*Joel Sax*

## *Families, Mental Health & Pastoral Care in the Catholic Community (also pto)*

The Marriage and Family Life department of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales organised a National Day on Saturday October 20 to look at the challenges of supporting families affected by mental ill-health and the opportunities offered by adopting a family-sensitive approach to family life. It was chaired by Paul Farmer of *Mind*

Speakers included Julia Head, a chaplain of the *Spiritual and Pastoral Care* service of South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust; Chris Danes, who was a deputy head of a Catholic primary school but had to resign through ill-health aged 36 suffering from bi-polar; and Edna Hunneysett, carer, and author of *Carers in the Community: 'Why have you forsaken me?'* and *Christian Congregations and Mental Illness*.

Workshops included those facilitated by Richard Allen of the APCMH (befriending); Edna Hunneysett, (pastoral support groups); Dilys Barrell, pastoral assistant of 8 years experience, (organising events to raise awareness); Peter Gilbert, Professor of Social Work and Spirituality (spirituality & mental health); & Julia Head, (mental health ministry & care).

An account of the day is posted on the website at <http://www.everybodyswelcome.org.uk/mentalhealthday.html>. It is hoped to get some more detailed accounts of the workshops in the near future.

Roberta Canning maintains a network of those interested in mental health issues and produces a newsletter. Please contact Roberta if you would like to stay in touch or can contribute items. You can hear a slightly edited version of Edna Hunneysett's presentation on YouTube and her books can be purchased by telephoning 01642 818332.

Representatives from many dioceses were present and a number have decided to take up these issues in their own dioceses. The Archdiocese of Cardiff is planning a *Day of Reflection* to be held on 24 February and has invited Edna Hunneysett to speak at the event.

Each year Bishops collaborate on a *Day for Life*. This is celebrated on the 1st Sunday in July here in England and Wales. Next year's theme will be around the area of reducing stigma and raising awareness about mental health, families and pastoral care.

*Edna Hunneysett*