

Community of St Mary the Virgin

The Community of St Mary the Virgin is an Anglican Religious Community founded for women in 1848 by William John Butler - the then Vicar of Wantage. Prayer and worship are at the heart of our life, and out of this flow a variety of ministries and service. As a Community dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, we seek to live out our vocation in the spirit of Mary's words:

“Behold, I am the servant of the Lord. Let it be to me according to your word.”

Luke 1:38



Associates

Associates are those who wish to be received as friends of the Community. Along with the Sisters, they seek to live in the spirit of Mary's words as in Luke 1:38. Associates may be women or men, lay or ordained, married or single, and of any denomination. Emma Butler, wife of our Founder, became the first Associate in 1852 and her name heads the roll of Associates. Associates are linked to the Community and to one another through prayer and fellowship. There are quarterly newsletters, an Annual Associates' Day, and regular Associates' Retreats and Quiet Days. The Associates' fellowship is run by the Associates' Steering Group and there is an Associates' Link Sister to give a direct link with the Community. The Sisters pray regularly for the Associates.

Associates are invited to make an annual donation to cover expenses. A minimum contribution of £15 is suggested. Traditionally, this has been given as a thank offering at Candlemas - the Community's Patronal Festival.

Guiding Principles

Although individual circumstances will vary, Associates undertake to share in the Community's life and spirit through:

- ❖ Regular worship at the Eucharist.
- ❖ Daily prayer and Bible reading.
- ❖ Regular intercession for the Community and fellow Associates.
- ❖ Setting aside time for a regular retreat or quiet day.
- ❖ Concern and compassion for those in need.
- ❖ Simplicity of lifestyle and reverence for God's world.
- ❖ Fellowship and support for the Community and fellow Associates.

How do I become an Associate?

If you are interested in becoming an Associate please contact the Admissions' Associate as outlined below. This will give the opportunity to explore further.

If accepted to become an Associate, there is a short Admission Service which takes place in the presence of the Community and Associates. In token of the commitment undertaken, a badge is given.

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