

BFG - Family Strand - January '09

(Prepared by Moira Thom)

MOTHERS' UNION IN CONNOR DIOCESE

2008-09

The diocese remains as busy as ever - these are highlights since September 08:

- **'CURRY IN A HURRY....and lots more'**

The sixth edition of our student cookbook was distributed in September to freshers at University of Ulster at Coleraine and Jordanstown, as well as Queens University. Approximately 5000 were given out free of charge and were undoubtedly one of the most popular freebies at the Freshers' Bazaars.

This edition has been completely revised and updated. Since 2003, around 35,000 have been distributed. Funding for this 6th edition came from members and a generous donor.

- **HELP FOR HOSPITALS**

Members continue to support our two principle projects for local hospitals:

Emergency sponge bags

&

Premature baby clothes

Area chairmen visit local hospitals, from the Causeway to Lagan Valley, to supply basic sponge bags for emergency admissions. These are very much appreciated by A&E staff.

We visit the Special Care Baby Unit at the Royal Maternity Hospital at least twice a year with supplies of little clothes and gowns (for still birth babies and early baptisms). The hospital recently asked us to help supply mattress quilts for the incubators and members are busy supplying those also.

- **CENTRAL BELFAST CONTACT CENTRE**

The Contact Centre at Millfield operates two sessions every Saturday and is staffed by MU members who support the resident social worker. Around 95% of the volunteers are Connor MU members and the diocese also supports the centre financially each year.

- **MU PARENTING PROGRAMME**

Connor Diocese has 7 trained Parenting Facilitators and a further two in the process of training. This year we are promoting this service to church and community as we seek to reach out to parents. All of the facilitators have undergone extensive training accredited by the London Open College Network and are keen to use their skills in parishes and in the wider community. Training is on-going both at diocesan and All Ireland level.

- **THE O'NEILL CUP 2009**

This competition is held every three years and in 2009 the plan is to publish a collection of real life stories from Mothers' Union across the diocese. All branches will hopefully be included. This 'real' history of branch life will be published in Autumn 2009 and should be an important addition to the diocesan archives.