



### **Report: CDA CCRS for Deaf people, 2008-2010**

The CCRS course for Deaf people was held at Vaughan House, Westminster, over two and a half years run by Fr Paul Fletcher SJ and Peter McDonough.

A total of ten deaf people attended:

- 4 from Westminster diocese
- 3 from Arundel & Brighton diocese
- 1 from Salford diocese
- 2 from Liverpool diocese

One from Westminster diocese dropped out because she had a baby and gave birth to a second child during the first year of the CCRS course. She found it difficult to do the course and assignments whilst juggling the demands of family life.

One from Liverpool diocese dropped out after 3 modules; he found it difficult to cope with travel to London, finding time to do the assignments whilst remaining committed to his work and regular tennis competitions!

Another from Liverpool diocese joined us at the start of the fourth module. She completed five modules and is now doing three modules (OT; NT; Christology) in Liverpool diocese (LACE) with the support of a sign language interpreter and Fr Paul Fletcher SJ (now relocated back to Loyola Hall).

Out of the ten people, five completed and passed the CCRS course and the CCRS Administrator has been informed. Hopefully their certificates will be issued soon. Two others satisfactorily attended all course sessions but one person is struggling with assignments and will need extra private tutorials from both of us in the next couple of years. The other did not satisfactorily complete the assignments. Both received the CDA CCRS certificate course of attendance. And as mentioned in above paragraph, one from Liverpool diocese who has yet to complete three modules.

During the course we organised a group visit to the National Gallery (February 2009) because 'The Sacred Made Real' exhibition was on. This was relevant to the session on 'An appreciation of Christ in Art' (Christology module) and helped our students reconcile our course work with what exists in the world outside. We also made use of the resources associated with St. Paul Jubilee Year (June 2008-June 2009).

For the seventh module, graduates did practical 'Project work' as an assignment. They chose to lead prayer groups; give Adult-Faith formation presentations; or do pastoral visits; something practical that helped them to build confidence working with people in different situation or build on their leadership skills in their home situation, liaising with their Heads of Service (Pastoral Worker or Chaplain).

During the course we provided opportunities to enable the students to ask wide-ranging questions on Church teachings and issues relating to faith and daily living.

Not only were all participants fluent in British Sign Language, some had additional difficulties such as Dyslexia, visual impairments etc. hence the need to convert all our resources (handouts/power-point presentations) into a more readable Arial font.

The CDA CCRS course was specially designed by us to take into account Deaf people's general upbringing, their experiences as Deaf persons within the Church, as well as their language and culture. The course also focused on the visual aspects of presenting, catechizing and celebrating their faith within our British Deaf culture. The aim is to enable Deaf people to contribute to the life of our society and Church.

It has been a privilege yet again to offer this course to Deaf people for the third time running since we started in 1996. We are indebted to the diocese of Westminster for making their rooms available to us as a teaching venue. We also benefitted from a former CCRS deaf graduate assisting us regularly with practical matters (e.g. IT) as well as others giving the occasional one-off input on how they work as Catechists or Pastoral Workers in the Deaf Community. Hopefully it will not be too long before we offer a fourth CDA CCRS course possibly back in the north, and we wonder if an on-line medium might be of greater use in the future.