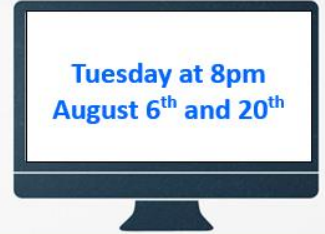




All this day, O Lord, let me touch as many lives as possible for thee; and every life I touch, do thou by thy Spirit quicken, whether through the word I speak, the prayer I breathe or the life I live. Amen.

August: MU at prayer

CHURCH ONLINE



St. Mary's Carlow
 7th November
 at 11.30am

Everyone Welcome

Diocesan
**HOLY
 COMMUNION**



Mothers' Union Enterprise

Contact Naomi on
 087 7674447 or cfomenterprise@gmail.com

For all your MU cards, gifts, badges, and merchandise.

Payment by credit card available.

Mothers' UNION
 Christian care for families
 Diocese of Cashel, Ferns & Ossory

Mums in May Fundraising
Concert
 BIG HYMN SING

Friday the 9th of August – Christ Church, Gorey at 7.30pm



With special guests:
Arklow Shipping Silver Band
Lir Female Ensemble

Ticket Price €10 including entry into Raffle
 Doors open at 7pm (Bring a Cushion)
 MUE Stall selling cards, books, etc.

Revenue Commissioner Number 5161
 Registered Charity Number 20007331



Dates for your Diary

- Big Hymn Sing Concert - Friday 9th August
 Christ Church Gorey at 7.30pm
- National Ploughing Championships 17th, 18th
 + 19th September Ratheniska, Laois
- Autumn Council - Saturday 26th October
 Dolmen Hotel Carlow from 10.30am
- CFO Diocesan Holy Communion - Thursday
 7th November St. Mary's Carlow at 11.30am
- 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based
 Violence November 25th - December 10th

We continue to pray for an
 end to all war and conflict.



Mary Sumner Day – August 9th

The following quote about Mary Sumner is very pertinent to remind us to not only look back with gratitude, but forward with faith and vision:

'Her foresight, her wisdom and judgment laid the great foundation stone for us. And as the building grows, and far and wide her early message goes forth – the same message, though to a different generation – we pray that the faith which shone through her every word and thought may illumine ours, that we, with grateful hearts, may build well and truly, as she did.'

Mrs Boustead, Central President of Mothers' Union: December 1927

It all started when Mary, married to George, Rector of the Parish of Old Alresford, was passionate about transforming the home-lives of parish families, by helping the women to support one another in raising their children. Her husband was very supportive: 'just share your heart – God will do the rest.'



She was so nervous at the first meeting of the parish women, that she refused to speak, and asked George to take her place. In those days, it was very unusual for a woman to be a public speaker. However, George encouraged her to speak from the heart and it went so well that she found the courage to speak at future meetings. Her talks were inspired by her faith – it was practical and down to earth – 'Remember, ladies, to be yourselves, what you would have your children be.'

After groups with women became well established, she was asked to speak to the men of the parish. Again, she was apprehensive, but agreed, and helped them to be more aware of what their wives did for them, and to show more respect and love. The meetings grew, and included women – old and young, rich, and poor. Others heard about her work and started groups in their own areas.

In 1876, she founded the 'Union of Mothers' – with a membership card and promise: 'to be given up, body and soul, to Jesus Christ in Holy Baptism, and that your duty is to train your children for his service.' In 1885, at a time when it was still unheard of for women to speak to large audiences, Mary Sumner was invited by the Presiding Bishop to speak to a packed church congress session for women in Portsmouth. He anointed her with the authority to speak – as he felt that he had no authority to speak to a group of women whose prime concern was to get enough food on the table so that the children would not starve. She overcame her nerves again. 'Together, by the Grace of God... we can calm each other when we are afraid; strengthen one another when we are weak; and work together to raise our children to the glory of God. Unity is strength.'

As the movement continued to grow, Mary Sumner asked herself what its purpose really was, and what it should strive for. She reflected: 'A true home should be a light-house, shedding its quiet beams far and wide' – her dream was for every home to be filled with the light and love of Jesus, and for the movement to unite many hearts in many lands, nurturing healthy environments for little children.

And she was a living example of what she preached. From 1900 onwards, she and the members started to advocate on issues of key importance to families and children – she campaigned to stop children collecting alcohol from public houses for their families, and for the age of marriage for girls to be raised from 12 to 16. She was not afraid to speak up on difficult issues, despite resistance from members of the establishment.

She was also not afraid to act outside the social norms, to do what she believed to be right. At a time when unmarried girls with children were condemned and cast out, she cared for and protected her niece and her illegitimate son. When she died in August, 1921, 4,000 women attended her funeral, which was a service of Thanksgiving. The last memory was one of her, on her feet in the sunlight, praising God.

She could not have conceived how the seeds which she planted would grow into a movement 4 million strong today, of members in 84 countries putting their faith into action to nurture healthy relationships in families and communities and to fight for social justice. (www.mothersunion.org)