

10-E-25

## NEW CREATION COMMUNITY (2)

**GAVIN Evans, a member of the 1984-85 NEW CREATION COMMUNITY in Birkenhead, tells us what the experience means to him.**

There are eleven of us living here in one of the Christian Brothers' houses in Birkenhead. We are a community which includes three Christian Brothers and eight young men. Having finished school, we are taking a year off before going on to employment or further education this October. I myself, Dave, Matt and Andy are from Plymouth, John and Andy Mac from Crosby, Damian from Manchester and Rob from Stoke. Quite an assortment.

But we all have one thing in common. We all consider our faith to be important enough to us that we can spend one year of our lives living in community — even though we have no intention of entering the Religious Life ourselves.

So how exactly are we spending this year out? Well, first of all, we consider the experience of living in community to be of primary importance. It is a chance to discover not only one's faults and failings, but more our strengths — in fact to realize one's true gifts in life; to discern one's mission in life as a Christian. By sharing our lives together, our meals, our prayer and of course our work, we have come to know one another and ourselves more fully, growing individually and as a group.

And indeed we see our work as essential to this community vision, as well as an expression of our faith. Our main work is our mission to schools, running Awareness days and weekend retreats. This is an opportunity to share our faith with other young people, in the hope that they too may grow in their faith. Our main work is in Christian Brothers' schools around the North West of England, although we do undertake a fair amount of travel around the country. Venues so far have included Plymouth, Stoke, Bath, Twickenham, Salford, Atrincham, Sunderland and even Dublin.

However, not all our time is spent praying and running retreats. Much of our time is free which gives us the opportunity to exercise our own initiative by becoming involved in community service, in whatever capacity and to whatever extent we choose. Dave and I help out in a youth club in inner-city Liverpool, for instance, and we all get the regular chance to give the Mother Teresa Sisters a hand with their work for the homeless. Four of us help with the local prayer groups; four visit the local primary school and help at the nearby youth club. And all of us are encouraged to help out in the local parishes, visiting old and lonely people or giving a hand to the parish priest.

### TIME TO REFLECT

Apart from all these activities, we do have time for our own personal study and reflection. Two mornings a week are set aside a few lessons on topics ranging from the Prophets to St. John's Gospel to Vatican II. Here is an invaluable opportunity to reflect upon and consider the full implications of our religion as applicable to our future lives. And time is provided for us to read up on those which particularly interest us, not forgetting the subjects we are due to be reading as from October.

For me, my year off is providing me with a golden opportunity to step back from the "rat race" before rushing headlong into life. Furthermore, that I have chosen to spend a year in a Christian community is of particular significance. It is a chance to be of service to others through the work the community undertakes, and also a chance to reflect upon and consider my own mission in life — how best I can live my faith in my future life. Indeed I consider this year to be part of my education — an education for life. To young people of my age, I say, "I believe the New Creation Community is worth considering. It could be for you".

Next year's community will be in a new venue, in the inner-city of Liverpool. It is also hoped that next year there will be four such communities in other parts of Liverpool, one in Manchester and one in Cambridge, some in the eighteen age group, some postgraduate communities and some university student communities.

So there's a good deal coming up in the near future for the New Creation Community...

(Gavin's account was originally written for publication in St. Edward's school magazine, Liverpool. We are grateful for the chance to give it wider publicity).

**DAILY PRAYER FOR NEW DISCIPLES**

**INTRODUCTION**

The time recommended for this prayer is late afternoon or after the evening meal if said in pairs or a group; or during any time in the evening or night if said singly, when you have the quiet to pray.

**The following 3 steps are suggested**

1. *THE PRESENCE OF JESUS*

To help you to open yourself to the presence of Jesus, say the following short prayer peacefully and slowly, three times.

'Jesus, I praise you within me – forever'

Spend about ½ minute in silence and peace thinking only one thing — that He is present.

It may help to open you to His presence if you repeat one word

'Jesus ... Jesus ...'

or repeat one phrase

'You within me ... You within me'

2. *THE WORD OF THE LORD*

Read a few verses of Scripture.

Spend a couple of minutes looking over what

you have read.

Stay with any words or phrases in the scripture passage that touch you deeply — because this is where Jesus is speaking to you.

This is listening to His Word. Don't hurry this step.

Allow yourself to respond to Jesus with feelings of love, praise, and thankfulness.

Speak to Jesus about the content of the reading especially any part that touched you deeply.

(If you are in a group of two or more, you can share the parts that touched you deeply and share your prayers of response).

3. *INTENTIONS*

Picture some person in your mind, name that person and call a blessing on him/her using this prayer:

... NAME ... May the Lord bless you and keep you.

May He show His face to you and have mercy on you.

May He turn His face to you and give you peace.

May the Lord bless you. Amen.

My Commitment to Prayer .....

My Commitment to Service .....