

CENACOLO COMMUNITY

“Cenacolo” is an Italian word meaning the upper room where the Last Supper was held. The Cenacolo Community was founded in July 1983 in Saluzzo, Italy by a nun called Sister (now Mother) Elvira Petrozzi, who wanted to give her life to God through helping young people suffering from addiction or who were disillusioned with their lives. Today, the Cenacolo Community has over 60 houses spread throughout Italy and around the world. The Cenacolo Community UK at Dodding Green near Kendal is one of these houses and is currently the only house in the UK offering up to 16 places for young men.

The Cenacolo Community UK is a charity and was established for the relief and rehabilitation of persons in need, hardship or distress who are suffering physically and mentally as a result of drug or alcohol dependency, or other substance abuse, or who have lost their way in life, by the provision of supported residential accommodation in a Christian environment.

Life in the Community is simple and centred on work, prayer and friendship. It is run by recovering addicts themselves, under the overall direction of Mother Elvira who regards Cenacolo as a ‘school of life’ which teaches young people how to close the door on their past by healing old wounds and building towards a brighter future. Cenacolo gives hope and an opportunity to live an addiction-free life with dignity and respect for oneself and others. It offers help to those who have lost direction and enables them to go forward with new strength to face the challenges of every day.

The young men in the Community give testimonies at a wide variety of venues (such as secondary schools and colleges) describing the disastrous effects of drug and alcohol addiction, how it affects whole families and how the Cenacolo Community has helped them turn their lives around. Their daily work within the Community at Dodding Green, includes cleaning, cooking, general maintenance, repairing fences and walls, keeping the footpaths maintained, painting, woodworking, looking after the livestock (pigs, ducks and chickens), and growing a variety of salads, vegetables and fruits. This home-grown produce supplements the providence given by parishes from within the Lancaster Diocese and other generous local supporters.

Prayer is fundamental to the Community. Many prayer groups around the country pray on a regular basis for the work of the Cenacolo Community UK, for the lads in the house and for those still in the outside world afflicted with addiction and other problems. These prayer groups are a network across the country forming a web of grace to support the apostolate of Cenacolo. Such prayerful faithfulness is vital for the work of Cenacolo to succeed and the Community is grateful for this continued support.

Cenacolo within the Parish

The Parish supports the lads within the Cenacolo Community in two ways:

- **By prayer** - A group regularly meets to pray for the lads in the Community. Dates and times are noted on the bulletin. We would ask everyone to remember the lads in your prayers.
- **By providence donations** - On the 2nd Sunday of each month a collection of food and other provisions is held at each of the weekend Masses. Donations can be left on St Edward's altar. Foodstuff should be tinned or dried (eg rice, pasta, couscous, tinned food, cereals, coffee, tea), but not perishable fresh food as it needs transporting to Kendal, which may not happen immediately. Items such as cleaning materials, shampoo, shower gel and toilet rolls are also gratefully received. Although chocolate is appreciated occasionally, it isn't one of the essentials that the lads need.

Cenacolo supporters are always welcome, especially at the prayer group and for helping at events. Are you interested?

One of the wall boxes in the church porch is now given over to supporting Cenacolo.

**“Let us pray for those who suffer and for those in poverty.
Through the gifts we share and through our work and prayer for justice may they be raised up; and may they be witnesses of God's covenant of love for all his people.”**