



Profile: Rev. Deacon John Foley

Rev. Deacon John Foley has been involved with the Alton day of Renewal since 1989. Sharing the role of Core Group Leader with fellow deacon John Edwards from 1997, he took on full leadership around 2010. He was ordained a permanent deacon in the Catholic Church in 2006 and retired in 2018. During his time in active ministry he was involved with various charities supporting young people, young families and the elderly. He worshiped at St Oswald's Church Burghfield Common, where he was involved in all aspects of Parish Life, running, Rosary group, Alpha Courses and Holy Spirit Prayer Groups. He trained for three years to become an Ignatian Spiritual Director. He has always been interested in Christian Unity and was Chairman and Secretary of the Local Churches Together grouping.

Since retirement from active ministry he has taken on a lower profile, handing on the leadership of the ADORE to Alastair Emblem in January 2018. Whilst still very ecumenical, he has relinquished all his official role and prefers, as he says *'to focus on 'being' rather than 'doing'*, he still has the servant heart of a deacon and is happy to be able to concentrate on supportive, rather than leadership roles. He now worships at St Joseph's Tilehurst, remains a core group member of ADORE, attends a Rosary Group, and the Holy Spirit Prayer Group but now as a member rather than a leader. He helps people through their difficulties and interviews clients attending his local branch of the West Berks Foodbank, 'signposting' them to other charities who can help with debt management etc. He says, *'He has retired twice, but the Lord always seems to have some new work for him to do'*, hopefully, this time, at a slower pace.

Before taking early retirement from his business career and being ordained a Permanent Deacon John was Head of Buying for Fruit, Vegetables, Salads and Ornamental Horticulture for Waitrose supermarkets, the Food Division of the John Lewis Partnership, where the shares are held in trust for the benefit of the 80,000 Partners. He worked there for 42 years working his way up from the shop floor to senior management.

John was involved with agriculture and horticulture for over 55 years and his experience ranges from organic production to genetically modified crops. He has served on various Governmental committees, including the Pesticide Forum, national and EU trade organizations and has dealt with both the international agrochemical and pharmaceutical industries. He was instrumental in Waitrose joining the premier environmental programme of its time. LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming). He also supported the Fairtrade Foundation, a precursor to Waitrose establishing its own foundation for the communal benefit of producers and their employees. John was very involved in moral and ethical issues for many years. Ten years before retirement John was asked by his Managing Director to develop Waitrose's ethical and responsible trading policies. These were subsequently embraced by the whole of the John Lewis Partnership.

He was a foundation member of the ETI (The Ethical Trading Initiative), working with NGO community, trade unions and other retailers in the development of labour standards throughout the global supply chain. He was also one of the original architects of SEDEX (Supplier Electronic Data Exchange) used to monitor and direct the auditing process.