

THE POWER OF LIVING WATER
OCTOBER 2017

Dear Sisters

I have recently been on holiday to the west coast of Scotland, staying near to Oban which is a port and seaside town. Ferries from the port sail every day to many of the western isles, including - via the Island of Mull - Iona.

Iona is the island which forms the base now for the Iona Community; an ecumenical Christian organisation which amongst many other activities produces worship material which uses and draws upon ancient Celtic prayers. I often use their prayer books in my own private devotion as well as using their prayers and liturgies when conducting services.

I was eager therefore, whilst on holiday, to visit the island of Iona, to see the place which has provided me with prayer resources which have enriched my spiritual life. It is a bit of a trek to get there! The ferry crossing from Oban takes about 45 minutes followed by a drive along a very scenic road on Mull for about an hour. The crossing from Mull to Iona is done in ten minutes; Iona can be seen from the port at Mull. The abbey on Iona and indeed the island itself are beautiful and I could see why people were and are drawn here. Iona feels to be a distant place.

Sometimes we need that distance to meet with God – it is important to set time aside – to withdraw from the world to learn more of what God wants in our lives.

The interesting thing about Iona, however is that back in the first century when the abbey was first founded, Iona was not the distant, isolated place we see it as now. That is not because the island has moved! It is because the way the world is viewed has changed. In the first century, much travel was done by boat and Iona was in fact in the middle of very busy shipping routes which connected it to Ireland, Scotland, Scandinavia, Northumbria and even France. It soon became a hugely influential centre of learning, education and Christian missionary work.

Sometimes we need to realise, how influential we can be in the lives of others.

I hope that MWA provides you all with both these aspects of faith. Firstly, time set aside to read and discuss the Devotional papers with each other – hopefully providing each of us with some insight of God which helps us with our own life. Secondly, an opportunity to learn about other people around the world, their lives and concerns and struggles but also an opportunity to help in practical ways, usually by raising money to help those who help these people in need.

Yours in Christ

Sr Janet Cooper