

## **A testimony on the creation of Life Ascending UK**

I am Mrs Paula Conrad and I founded The Ascent (La Vie Montante) in the UK in 1980 when I was 43 years old.

I did not speak French, had no secretarial skills and had 5 young children but by the grace of the Holy Spirit I persevered and managed to spread the movement to many parts of our country. By the late 1990's there were about 65 groups. Over the years we have had many celebrations and events. Until COVID we had 2 annual retreats and had representatives at any major event for older people. We always sent delegates to the World and European Congresses. As time has moved on life has changed and sadly the majority of our groups have had to close, due to the frailty or death of Group Leaders and members.

Getting people to take on responsibilities and even running a group is a problem. Traditional methods of communication were better at reaching potential new members rather than everything being online. We need more workers in the field to spread the Word. I am forever hopeful because I see the great value in our movement. In February we looked at the problems of modern Slavery and Human Trafficking and during our March group meeting we looked at the Year of Hope. Our 8 members said how much they loved the meetings because of the sharing the warmth and love as well as keeping in touch by the group's Whatsapp.

**With the growing numbers of elderly, we really have to find ways of helping parishes to discover Life Ascending. Perhaps this can be our Mission in this Year of Hope.**

Members are organised into three regions - North, Westminster, Southwark.

Within the North Region we have five groups and a total of 33 members.

Within the Westminster Region, seven groups and a total of 70 members.

Within the Southwark Region, five groups and a total of 66 members.

We also have Associate members and they total 9.

In all, a grand total of 178 members