

ST.MARY'S CHURCH KNARESBOROUGH

PARISH ANNUAL REPORT

APRIL 2011 – APRIL 2012

PARISH DATA 2011-12

Baptisms: 15

Marriages: 1

Funerals: 9

First Communicants: 24

Adults received into full communion: 2

Average Sunday Mass Attendance: 273 (based on October figures)

PASTORAL PARISH COUNCIL (PPC)

The PPC is an advisory body whose members are actively involved in working for the parish. It normally meets four times a year and more frequently if needed. The date of the next meeting is published in advance in the bulletin together with a request for any agenda items. Names of members, dates of meetings for the year, agenda and minutes are emailed to the members registered on the parish database, posted on the church website and in future a copy will be posted on the Atrium notice board and held in a red folder in the Atrium. Back copies of minutes are available from the church office.

The PPC meets four times in a calendar year. Meetings since the last Annual Parish Meeting were 14th April, 14th July, 13th October 2011 and 12th January, 19th April 2012, The agenda for each meeting included reports from Area and Parish group representatives. In addition to the work of the parish groups, the PPC supported the following in 2011 -12:

Parish Liturgy Group
Family Life Ministry and Baptism
Preparation of First Holy communion
and for Confession
School/Home/Parish links
St. Josephs Table
Diocese 'Come & See' Programme
Prayer Group
Prayer Tree
Proposals for changes to Car Park
Arrangements

St.Mary's School Masses
Traidcraft & Fair Trade
Support for Claver Hall
Support for 3 African Parishes - Fr.
Matthew in Burkino Faso, Fr. Justin
and Fr. Francis
Support for Parish Newsletter
Updated Parish database
Support for repairs to the Church
Youth group – Viva La Fun

PARISH EVENTS: -

Sunday Family Mass led monthly by the children from our primary School. (Mass is also celebrated in School on a regular basis).

Healing Mass with Father Stephen Wright OSB

Services of Reconciliation take place during Advent and Lent

During May the Rosary is said after each weekday Mass including Saturday

HALL /CHURCH BUILDING:

During 2011 a new Fabrics committee reporting to the Parish Priest and the Parish Council was set up to oversee repairs the church and associated land and buildings. The committee's aim is to prioritise the work needed and liaise with the finance committee to ensure spending is within the scope that the parish is able to afford. Where possible external funds are sought together with being mindful of the requirement for the parish to repay the loan from Ampleforth which was granted to carry out the extensive works of 1999/2000.

Last year the church spent £49,399.50 including fees on major repairs to the Hall roof.

The Fabrics committee is currently investigating the repair of the car park for which a number of quotes have now been received. We await a final submission after which a decision will be made on the scale of repairs to be carried out.

Repairs to the toilets in particular the flooring are under consideration.

Replacement of the blue fencing – estimates are being sought with the cost being borne from parish funds or the possibility of sponsorship from within the parish.

Hall windows require replacement or repair. Planning permission may be needed and negotiations are underway.

Hall refurbishment – plans and costings are underway and external funding (ie lottery grant etc) will be sought.

Church/chapel decor – Some parishioners have become increasingly concerned with the state of decor. This will be addressed by the Fabrics Committee.

Young People of the Parish

Children's Liturgy

Through Lent we have been doing Children's Stations of the Cross again. We talked through the stations to be covered that week in liturgy and then one of the leaders walked round with the children after mass. This seemed quite popular and hopefully helped the children learn a bit more about the Easter story.

We will be thinking about Mary again during May and will be practicing saying the rosary and encouraging the children to say the rosary at home.

Jeff organised a successful Easter Egg Hunt on Easter Sunday which was enjoyed by all – thank you Jeff!

Prayers and Pizza

We met up every other week during Lent. We have looked at Stations of the Cross and different ways of praying. We are hoping to put together a Youth Mass with music and readings by the young people at some point but the date is still to be decided.

Viva La Fun, Youth Club

Had a successful trip to the pantomime which everyone enjoyed. Alison has organised a swimming party for the children in the next couple of weeks which has had a good uptake so far. We are continuing to meet on a monthly basis.

World Youth Day

Next world youth day is in Rio, Brazil in the summer of 2013. There is a trip being run by Anna Cowell, Youth Worker for Leeds Diocesan Youth Service. The deadline for the trip has passed but if anyone is interested there may still be places available if you want to contact Anna. It is for young people between the ages of 18-35. World Youth Day is when the Pope goes to a specific place in the world and meets with young people. In Madrid last year there were over 2 million young people from across the world! Let me know if anyone is interested.

General

Need to encourage young people to join the Leeds Diocesan Youth Service Facebook page (just type Leeds Diocesan Youth Service in to Facebook) – lots of events and activities on here – we could perhaps advertise this on the youth notice board.

Pastoral group – Visits sick and housebound parishioners. The hope remains that a small group of people will come forward to take over. This voluntary work does bring its own rewards. St. Mary's is currently liaising with Wetherby St. Vincent de Paul society to examine the setting up of the same with a view to strengthening activities in this field.

Help could be available to support in the early stages of the new group.

Shrine Group -

Mass at the Shrine

28th May 2012 – Fr. George celebrated Visitation Mass.

5th June 2012 – the York Carmelite Spirituality Group from York, Leeds and Manchester came to celebrate Mass with their priest, Father Tony Lester.

27th August 2012 – Fr. Stephen celebrated Mass for Our Lady.

10th December 2012 – Fr. Stephen celebrated Mass for the Immaculate Conception.

The group thanks Fr. George and Fr. Stephen for celebrating Masses over the past year.

Future Mass dates for 2012:-

Visitation Mass – Saturday 2nd June at 12.00

Assumption Mass – Saturday 18th August at 12.00

Fr. Tony Lester will celebrate a Carmelite Mass at 4 pm on Sunday 13th May – all are welcome.

Site

The group has approached the PPC regarding funding for site maintenance work which is outside its scope. Due to the cost implications of any remedial work, the PPC would need to approach Ampleforth Abbey Trust.

A risk assessor from Ampleforth Abbey Trust's insurers visited the site early April at Father Stephen's request, following a health and safety assessment at St. Mary's Church. He will report on his findings in due course.

A quote has been requested in respect of maintenance to the Chapel Window.

Prior to opening this year the Group (of 5) have cleaned the Chapel access steps and painted the handrail to improve visitor safety.

The Group would like to make improvements to the areas required for Masses and access, these will be required to be done in stages and each stage at a high cost for which the Group will attempt to raise the funds. The final outcome is hoped to be beneficial to visitors for many years to come.

The time scale will depend on donations received. Grants are limited owing to the religious nature of the site.

Information

The group managed to obtain a refund of VAT from Listed Places of Worship in respect of the specialised work carried out on the Knight carving and Chapel in 2009 and 2010.

The group's building society account stands at a little over £3,000. VAT refund for the conservation work and an anonymous donation were large amounts received during the year.

The chapel will be open on Sunday afternoons 2pm – 4pm until 25th September this year, weather permitting.

P. Thornes April 2012

Faith & Light –

This group works with parishioners with learning difficulties .

It was the 40th anniversary of Faith and Light last year and sadly this group has now finished. Eileen Agar, chair thanked all who had supported. The group worked with disabled and special needs parishioners and over the years has been involved with regular activities including regular Masses, visits to the pantomime (generously sponsored by an individual donor who sadly died this year), Christmas parties, singalongs and many other stimulating and happy events. The Parish would like to thank all of the volunteers who have worked tirelessly over the last 25 years since Fr. Theo set up St.Mary's group and especially Eileen Agar who has chaired the group and been a member of the PPC for all that time.

Church Shop- The Church shop here is run for the promotion of religious books, magazines, artefacts, information and for the delight of children discovering the moral value in fun and attractive ways, that is, even a pen or eraser can remind children of God's care and love! All merchandise is purchased through "Wesley Owen - religious books". We deal on a basis of sale or return, and 10% commission. There are some very good books but people need to take time to study these to realise their worth. The shop currently stocks very nice things for First Holy Communion and Confirmation. Our profit goes towards the Church debt. A very sincere "thank you" to all the ladies that give their valuable time every week to the shop, and its worthwhile service to St Mary's.

Fairtrade -

St Mary's is a Fairtrade Parish, a status granted by the Fairtrade Foundation (see www.fairtrade.org.uk for more information). This was achieved by the commitment of the Parish to use Fairtrade Tea and Coffee at all Parish Events, and to use and promote other Fairtrade products where possible.

Use of Fairtrade Tea and Coffee is well established, as is the sale of Fairtrade produce in the shop. Chocolate and Muesli are popular at present. Some items, which have sold well in the past, such as Fair Break biscuits and Coffee are no longer selling well and have to be sold-off cheaply once they reach their sell-by date.

Another aspect of supporting Fairtrade is to raise awareness of the huge benefits it brings to producers, their families and communities in the developing world, and the difference we can make as consumers by choosing Fairtrade products. The Annual Fairtrade Fortnight is a national awareness-raising event promoted by the Fairtrade Foundation and other associated charities. This occurs in February/March each year. This year we marked Fairtrade Fortnight by holding a Big Brew in the Church Hall after 10 AM Mass on 4th March, where information was available on Traidcraft's work, and the benefits of Fairtrade to producer. A Fairtrade Raffle was held which was well supported. The event raised just over £179 in support of Traidcraft's development work with Fairtrade producers.

All Fairtrade stock for the Shop is purchased from Traidcraft. More information on Traidcraft's Mission and Principles can be found on their website at http://www.traidcraft.co.uk/about_traidcraft

Philip Bothamley

Justice & Peace – Works on behalf of our parish, supporting third world poverty issues.

We have sent money through to Tanzania and Burkina Faso,

As follows; -

£250 sent on 6th January for Fr. Francis Mwamambo, in Tanzania.

£300 sent on 6th January for Fr. Niampa Etienne at Titao.

£120 sent on 9th December to Fr. Mathieu Sawadogo, this was from the money raised in Church to support Fr. Mathieu in Mexico.

We have not sent money to Bamm in Burkina Faso as yet, because we are awaiting confirmation of the correct bank account.

J & P have written to Fr. Niampa in Titao and Fr. Blaise Ouedrago in Bamm, but have not received any reply yet.

J & P also wrote to Fr. Terry Madden.

The major concern is that none of the current J & P members have good written French and as the parishes we liaise with overseas are French speaking and have little written English themselves communications can be difficult.

We continue to collect through the brown envelopes and are looking to increase the number of people contributing.

Family Life Ministry - (supports families and provide marriage preparation and baptism courses).

Baptisms and marriages took place throughout the year. This group has been re-organised under new Stewardship.

St. Mary's School – please see appendix 1

Churches together - working to co-ordinate Christian activities across the various churches in Knaresborough. Activities have included:

Activities have included:

- Prayers and Hot Cross Buns in the Market square on Good Friday. 200 buns given away and prayers from the public collected on crosses
- Childrens Easter Club held at Gracious Street Methodist premises. Over 70 children attended with ages ranging from 3 to 14
- CTinK Choir sang at the turning on of the Town's Christmas Light
- Nativity Play performed by CTin K on Christmas Eve
- CTinK Christmas Card advertising the times of Services at all Churches in Knaresborough distributed to all household
- Ladis and Men's teams from CTinK entered in the Bed Race and significant funds raised for Christian Aid
- FEVA Songs of Praise was held in August at St John's church
- Christian Aid – various events including the Bed Race and door to door collections had contributed to over 4000 pounds being raised for Christian Aid

Some Forthcoming Events are:

- CTinK ladies team competing in the Bed Race (the application from the Men's team was unsuccessful)
- Jubilee Big Lunch – being organized by Gracious Street Methodist Church (more details in the Bulletin as they emerge)

- FEVA Songs of Praise 19 August at Knaresborough United Reform Church (venue to be confirmed so watch out for it in the Bulletin)
- 11 July a Christian Aid market stall (preserves, bric a brac, baking etc in the Market Square)
- An Evening with Frank Williams (the vicar in Dad's Army) on 11 August at 7.30 in Gracious street Methodist Church (further details in the Bulletin nearer the time)

Prayer Group – meets weekly Wednesday evening, everyone welcome to pray for the world and for the Parish and includes in their prayers the petitions placed on the prayer tree.

Healing prayer team -The team supports those seeking healing by their prayers and healing ministry. A healing Service and Mass is held annually with Fr Stephen.

Pilgrimage Group – meets to support St. Mary's at Jablinica, Near Mostar in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In the past the group has visited the Parish Priest Don Ivan.

Also the group supports Matthew Proctor and his charity Miracles working to support children who are underprivileged and in particular those who have lost limbs through landmines.

We continue to reach out to projects with links to our parish in Bosnia-Herzegovina and in nearby Bradford!

Bosnia- Herzegovina: Each year the parish pilgrimage group take donations and gifts raised by members of the parish for Mathew Proctor in Mostar and the parish of St Mary's in Jablaniça. The links with the small mountain parish of Jablaniça go back to the time of the Bosnian war when Cardinal Hume asked for help in finding out what was happening to children in Mostar, and what help was needed. Jablaniça was one of the towns ethnically cleansed, with men and boys aged 14 and over taken away and shot. Those women and children who could, escaped over the mountains to Mostar. Some returned to Jablaniça with their children who are now teenagers or in their twenties and beginning to marry and set up their own families.

Bosnia is still the most heavily land-mined area in Europe. Matthew Proctor has single-handedly established a Prosthetics Unit just outside Mostar. This provides limbs for children and young people damaged by the landmines and gives support to them and to their families during the periods of treatment and after-care. Matthew attended primary school when it was in our church hall and always visits us when he is in England. On his last visit he showed us a CD he had made of the work of the Unit. This has now been edited by a parishioner as a PC programme which can be borrowed by individuals, groups or schools interested in knowing more about Matthew's work.

The St Anthony Project is based at Claver Hall in Bradford. Claver Hall is a former presbytery of the Leeds Diocese. It is now home at any one time to four young men who are committed to moving from alcohol or drug addiction to total abstinence. Claver provides for twenty-four hour professional care and has achieved some outstanding success in helping young men return to independent living and employment. For example, one former resident has successfully returned to teaching; one has just returned from doing charity work abroad and a current resident has now been offered a place at university to study computer science. The project was largely set up as a result of initiatives from our parish in supporting homeless addicts. It was clear that the homeless lacked any kind of rigorous and consistent support, such as is now provided at Claver, and so had little chance of changing their lifestyle. The parish continues to support the Project through fund-raising, donations and, most importantly, through prayer. Plans are underway to establish a 'Friends of Claver Hall' group and further details for anyone interested will be available shortly.

St. Joseph's Table – collects on a monthly basis and provides much appreciated food for St. Peter's in Harrogate who provide breakfast and evening meals for the homeless.

Communications Group – Organised to keep Parishioners informed of activities at St.Mary's.

Parish Newsletter

The ninth edition (featuring Parish Fairtrade activity and an introduction to Father Stephen) was distributed in January.

The tenth edition is at the planning stage and should be available June/July.

Distribution is via e-mail, publishing on the Parish website and paper copies. Reduced the print run to 100 for the last edition (down from 120) and there were quite a few left over for several weeks. This suggests that distribution by e-mail and availability on the Parish website is having some effect.

Contact database

Currently undergoing major refresh. Benefits will include a much expanded e-mail contact list.

The e-mail list was used to publicise the Fairtrade event in March but I would like more organisers to be aware of this facility so we can make greater use of it, especially to bring items to the attention of people who may have missed the bulletin. I will approach organisers of events open to the whole parish and ask if they would like to have an e-mail sent out in addition to a bulletin notice.

Parish Council Minutes

Minutes of Parish Council Meetings continue to be published on the Parish website, now extended so that the few previous meetings remain, not just the latest version

Ends