



Welcome to our Parish newsletter. Issued by your Pastoral Parish Council it aims to keep you in touch with activities in our parish. We plan to produce the newsletter every three months and hope to bring you interesting and informative articles to help you get the most out of our church. We welcome your input, so please let us have your comments and contributions. Contact details are on the back page.

St Mary's Church

# Parish Newsletter

## Young people

Did you know the Sunday Mass at 5pm was specially set up for the young people of the parish? Ok, you have had a great night out on Saturday so how can anyone expect you to be up early on Sunday for 10am Mass?!! After the 5pm Mass why not use it as an opportunity to meet your mates? The garden is an attractive venue now that the lighter nights are here.

## Summer fun

The first date for your diary is the Parish barbecue to be held on the evening of Saturday 2 September in the church garden. Look out for more details soon.

We are hoping to hold one or two more events this Summer, so watch this space!

## Bereavement group

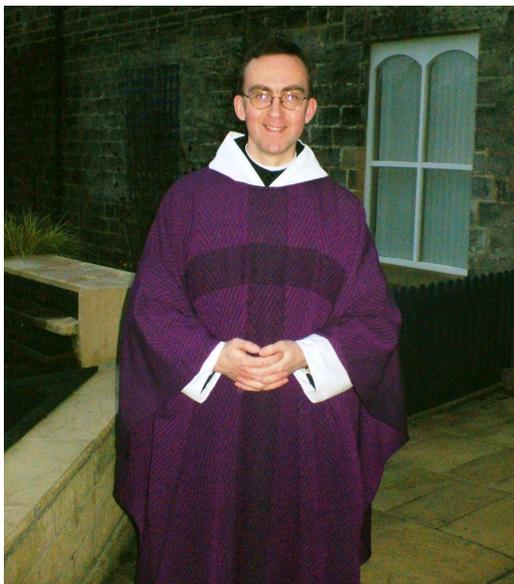
We are planning to set up a group to help in the traumatic experience that can come with the sometimes unexpected loss of a loved one. The aim is to help morally, spiritually and practically when people find themselves alone in dealing with the situation. We can build a database of information to minimise the amount of work needed at this difficult time. If you think you can help in any way please contact Mary Jo on 861065.

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## Who is Father George?

As we welcome our new priest some of you may be wondering just who and what sort of person he is. However, Father George is not so new - he has



been with us seven months already! He hails from Workington in Cumbria, and moved to Cockermouth at the age of 11 where he attended Cockermouth Grammar. He studied Law at Liverpool University, and had been aware of his vocation for some time when he answered the call to the priesthood by joining the Diocese of Lancaster after graduation. He undertook Theological Studies at the seminary at Ushaw College in Durham and was ordained in 1988. His first post was as Curate at the Parish of English Martyrs in Preston. While there,

Fr George still felt that he had a monastic calling, and joined Ampleforth in 1991. He made his solemn vows in 1995.

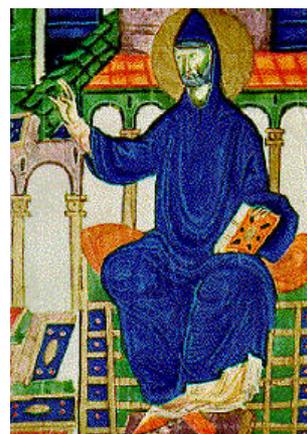
During his time at Ampleforth Father George has fulfilled a wide variety of roles: theology teacher, guest master, giving retreats, novice master and the busy post of Prior from 1997 until his arrival at St Mary's.

One role he has not left behind is Child Protection Co-ordinator for Ampleforth, which will continue to occupy some of his time. This work is under the auspices of Copca, the Catholic Office for the Protection of Children & Vulnerable Adults ([www.catholic-ew.org.uk/copca](http://www.catholic-ew.org.uk/copca))

Spare time is a rare thing, and when it does occur he enjoys reading and walking. On his time so far at St Mary's, Father George says that everyone has been very welcoming and he is happy to be here. We can assure him that the feeling is mutual!

## The Rule of St Benedict

We have been reading with interest the well chosen lines from the Rule of St Benedict in the weekly bulletin. This article gives a brief background to the Rule.



Historians are relatively certain that it was written by St. Benedict, the founder of the monastery of Monte Cassino, though the historical evidence does not allow a conclusive proof. St. Benedict's biographer, St. Gregory the Great (pope from 590 to 604), indicates that Benedict "wrote a *Rule* for monks that is remarkable for its discretion and its clarity of language".

Whilst the Rule includes prescriptions for living in a monastery, it contains a treasure of spiritual wisdom. Its Prologue and

73 chapters provide teaching about the basic monastic virtues of humility, silence, and obedience as well as directives for daily living. The Rule prescribes times for common prayer, meditative reading, and manual work; it legislates for the details of common living such as clothing, sleeping arrangements, food and drink, care of the sick, reception of guests, recruitment of new members, and journeys away from the monastery. While the Rule does not shun minute instructions, it allows the abbot to determine in detail the particulars of common living. Father George recommends it as a rule for beginners, as Benedict intended it to be. When pressed to select a favourite extract, he chose: "Prefer nothing to Christ."

A grandfather was walking through his yard when he heard his granddaughter repeating the alphabet in a tone of voice that sounded like a prayer. He asked her what she was doing. The little girl explained: "I'm praying, but I can't think of exactly the right words, so I'm just saying all the letters, and God will put them together for me, because He knows what I'm thinking."

## SPOTLIGHT on St Mary's Justice & Peace Group

Our Parish supports a number of charity activities. This article highlights the work of our Justice & Peace Group to help our fellow Christians in Africa. This work is organised by Evelyn Coman.

Many years ago, a White Father, Terry Madden was posted to Titao in Burkina Faso. He had lived in our parish, and his parents owned the Mother Shipton Inn. During the 1980s St Mary's parish made contact with his parish in Titao in Burkina Faso and the parish of Kala in Tanzania. The aim was to encourage the spread of the Christian faith and to assist in the provision of basic needs such as the sinking of a well in the village of Titao and the purchase of a boat for the priest in Kala, who could then travel to outstations along the shores of Lake Tanganyika.

### Titao

In 1987 the £1 per month envelope scheme was launched to relieve famine in Titao. The scheme funded a school for

teenage boys and girls to develop their basic education and to study more efficient ways of cultivating the staple crop of millet and of caring for livestock. There are now 60 members of the envelope scheme contributing £1 per month. If anyone would like to join, please contact the Justice and Peace committee on 01423 547339

Fr Matthew became parish priest at Titao in 1994 and proved an excellent correspondent.



He visited Knaresborough in 1996 and was warmly welcomed. Soon after his return to West Africa his moped broke down beyond repair. An appeal to the parish and schools raised £1600 in less than 12 months. The parish of Titao now has a new parish priest, Fr Nazaire and two curates. Three couples trained as catechists have arrived and they visit the numerous villages.

Fr Matthew moved to new work as chaplain to the school children and young people of Ouahigouya. He and his team of helpers organised talks and discussions in the limited facilities of the chaplaincy. He was anxious to provide a basic study centre so that the children could do their homework in electric light, assisted by a supply of textbooks. In Advent 1999, St John Fisher's and St Robert's schools raised £1975 to set up such a building. In June 2000 Fr Matthew visited England to tell us how delighted the youngsters were with the new buildings, and to express his profound gratitude.

## Kala

In Kala the parish priest was a local man, Fr Modest. A corn mill was sent to the parish before his arrival which benefitted not only his parishioners but people from further afield. Fr Modest worked single-handedly to serve many outstations, battling against frequent floods. He has now been replaced by Fr Francis, another local man, who was ordained at the same time as Fr Modest. Life is also

a struggle for him and his people; earthquakes, famine, floods and cholera have all taken their toll. He has many outstations



where he travels to say Mass and administer the sacraments. He is very grateful when we send approximately £500 per year and uses the money carefully. Fund-raising has been through donations, an annual quiz and raffles.

The Justice and Peace group receives news of CAFOD's initiatives and writes to the local MP on subjects of topical concern. Letters are sent to embassies asking for investigation into injustices towards prisoners of conscience discovered by Amnesty International. At Christmas, the parish are invited to send greeting cards to such prisoners. In all these ways the Justice and Peace group helps the parish to fulfil its obligation to the developing world and to assist in campaigns against unjust practices by governments.

## Can you help?

Would you believe that there are 50 different activities going on in our church? A spreadsheet will soon appear in the atrium showing all 50 of them. Some would appreciate your help: Faith & Light, St Joseph's Table, and the Social Committee to name but a few. Your support would be warmly welcomed. If you wish to help in any of these areas please contact the activity leader directly (if you are unsure who they are or what they look like you can always leave a note on the letter board) Alternatively, contact a member of the Parish Council or email [simon-knowles@supanet.com](mailto:simon-knowles@supanet.com)

We would like to offer the newsletter by e-mail, where possible, for speed, convenience and to keep a lid on production costs. A database of parish e-mail addresses will also offer an extra communication channel in addition to the weekly bulletin and notices in the atrium. Please write your e-mail address on the list in the atrium or send to: [chrisclissitt@ukonline.co.uk](mailto:chrisclissitt@ukonline.co.uk) (You will still have the option of picking up a copy at church!) This is also the address for comments, ideas and contributions. Alternatively, leave a note on the letter board or phone 867347.