



This is the fifth edition of our Parish newsletter, designed to keep you in touch with activities in our parish. We welcome your input, so please let us have your comments and contributions. Contact details:

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Alternatively, leave a note on the letter board.

This newsletter is also available on the parish website www.knaresborough.co.uk/stmaryrcchurch

Parish Newsletter

St Mary's Church

Restore Our Chapel Knight!

As featured in the last edition, 2008 is the 600th anniversary of the construction of the Chapel of Our Lady of the Crag. On Saturday 5th July there will be a day of celebration and fund-raising for the restoration of the famous knight at the chapel entrance.



An unusual shot of the chapel interior

Programme

* Chapel open all day 10 -5

* 12.00-12.45, 4.00-4.45:
An illustrated talk on shrines of Mary in Knaresborough House by Chris Maunder, a theology lecturer at York St John.

You will see how Knaresborough takes its place in an international network of shrines.

* 2.30-3.30: Ecumenical service at the chapel. All welcome. Carmelites and Benedictines will be in attendance, two religious orders with historical links to shrines of Mary.

* 7.30 p.m: Quiz at Knaresborough House. Includes historical questions as well as general knowledge. Tickets £6 including food. Bring your own drinks.

* An illustrated booklet on the history of the chapel on sale at the chapel and Knaresborough House. Price £3, all profits to the ROCK appeal.

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SPOTLIGHT on Parish Pastoral Group

Mother Teresa once said "Loneliness ... is the most terrible poverty." Or, as Cyril Connolly put it, "The dread of loneliness is greater than the fear of bondage, so we get married."

For many years a group of parishioners have been helping

alleviate loneliness and bring company and cheer into the lives of the sick and the housebound. Many now have no family locally, and human contact is a real boost to morale. Those who would welcome a visit are identified by the Eucharistic Ministers. Members of the Pastoral Group will visit, chat, perhaps take a bulletin and pass on news (births, marriages, deaths and any other Parish goings on.) Occasionally they will take them to mass.

In the past, there have been organised annual visits to church. Some of the sick and housebound would not have been for some time, and would enjoy a chance to be out mixing with other people. Sometimes they would

share a mass with the Faith and Light group. Afternoon tea in the hall, occasionally featured entertainment such as Irish dancers.



The group was originally part of the Saint Vincent De Paul Society. The group's work in St

Mary's was occasionally practical (e.g. decorating, distributing furniture donated by parishioners or giving it to Essential Needs) but the greater part of their activity was visiting the sick and housebound.

Over the decades the welfare state has taken care of many practical needs, and the demands in St Mary's Parish are now not so much material as pastoral; less pots and paintbrushes, more a friendly face and conversation.

About 5 years ago they reached a turning point when staying with the SVP would have meant CRB checks, officialdom, working with people on probation and being forced to undertake a

broader range of activities. Many members were recently retired and wanted to contribute something to their Parish, not necessarily as part of an international organisation with a wider remit. The group decided to split from the SVP and continue with the pastoral work which brought such benefit to the Parish.

The group used to be about 9 or 10 strong, but with the passage of time numbers have dwindled. Some got old, some moved away, and nowadays people are so busy with family and work that any spare time is precious.

Now is the time to relaunch the Parish Pastoral Group, and infuse it with some fresh blood. If you can spare any time the work is richly rewarding, and appreciation is heartfelt. The commitment is as much or as little as you like. You can visit different people but it is good to visit the same person more than once to get to know them, even if only a little. If you would like to help, please contact Cathy Binns or Christine Wood or speak to Father George.

The SVP is an international voluntary organisation of lay men and women of all ages, whose primary mission is to help the poor and less fortunate. The main work of the volunteer members is to befriend and assist individuals and families in need on a person-to-person basis.



The SVP was founded by Frederic Ozanam in Paris on his 20th birthday, 23rd April 1833. He led a group of six Sorbonne University students who met with a middle-aged journalist, Emmanuel Bailly, to form a group to be called the Conference of Charity. Their purpose was simple: as a small group of friends, they would become servants of the poor in Paris - just as Jesus Christ had been servant to the people of his time. Frederic, while speaking in defence of the Church in some fiery debates at the university, had been challenged by a young socialist: "What are you doing for the poor now? Show us your works!" Frederic realised that talk alone would never give full witness to the truth. That same night he and some friends pooled what money they had and bought firewood for a poor family.

The Rule of St Benedict

Chapter 33 answers the question of whether monks ought to have anything of their own. It forbids the private possession of anything without the leave of the abbot, who is, however, bound to supply all necessities.

Rule. Chapter 33

This vice especially is to be cut out of the monastery by the roots. Let no one presume to give or receive anything without the Abbot's leave, or to have anything as his own, anything whatever, whether book or tablets or pen or whatever it may be since they are not permitted to have even their bodies or wills at their own disposal; but for all their necessities let them look to the Father of the monastery. And let it be unlawful to have anything which the Abbot has not given or allowed. Let all things be common to all, as it is written (Acts 4:32), and let no one say or assume that anything is his own. But if anyone is caught indulging in this most wicked vice, let him be admonished once and a second time. If he fails to amend, let him undergo punishment.

Father Murphy

Father Murphy walked into a pub and said to the first man he met, "Do you want to go to heaven?" The man replied, "I do Father." The priest said, "Then stand over there against the wall." Then the priest asked a second man, "Do you want to go to heaven?" "Certainly, Father," was the man's reply. The priest said, "Then stand over there against the wall." Then Father Murphy walked up to O'Toole and said, "Do you want to go to heaven?" O'Toole said, "No, I don't Father." The priest said, "I don't believe this. You mean to tell me that when you die you don't want to go to heaven?" O'Toole said, "Oh, when I die, yes. I thought you were getting a group together to go right now."

Update on Church Repairs

This year you cannot have failed to notice the amount of work that has been going on in the Church. There were several specific problems:

- rising damp in the church and office
- penetrative damp in the house and chapel
- leaks around the shop/store wall/roof

Phase one: external

Ivies and plants were removed, ridge tiles were re-bedded, damaged tiles removed, downpipes and chimneys were repaired, roof timbers treated and the accommodation building is now weatherproof. I am sure you will agree it's important we keep our priests warm and dry!

Still to be addressed are some creeping ivy in the garden next door and the felling of a tree in the garden. The leaves from the tree are a constant problem causing blockage of roof drains. We have our neighbour's blessing to do the work.

A final piece is the proposal to clear away the the vegetation from the side of the church where we have damp and to lower the soil level a bit. This will not stop rising damp but should reduce it.

Phase two: rising damp

Our church is a listed building, and what initially looked like a simple exercise took much longer due to the need for permissions to carry out the work. The original plan was turned down by the

Historic Churches Committee, but thankfully after much effort by the finance committee the permissions were granted, although the rules restricted the type of treatment. The work has so far cost circa £25,000.

Work completed:

1) The work was classic "defect management". There will continue to be rising damp but with the hope that the new plaster will allow the moisture to escape.



2) Remedial work was carried out around the chimney breast on the roof of the chapel and some re-leading of the roof above Fr George's living room. The atrium was treated and redecorated but there remains a little work to be completed by the house door and the confessional.

3) The office was treated and is in the process of drying out. Migration of salts from the wall has

prevented decorating. It is planned to inspect the walls imminently to determine if we can finish the work.

4) The shop wall was stripped, a protective membrane attached and the wall replastered. The tiles were removed and refitted with extra tiles to ensure the drainage went into the gutter and not down the wall! The shop is now redecorated and back in use.

5) The walls in the house and chapel were stripped and replastered. The chimney breast in the chapel was in a serious condition of decay and required more work than expected. These areas will be redecorated at the same time as the office.

6) The entire loft area above the apartment was cleared of old insulation which had been there for many years. All the woodwork was treated for woodworm and dry rot and fresh modern insulation was installed.

Finally, we are awaiting an estimate for renewing the entire hall roof. We have been patching the roof to stop leaks but it is time to fix it properly.