



This is the fourth 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](http://www.knaresborough.co.uk/stmaryrcchurch)

## ROCK!

2008 is the 600<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the construction of the Chapel of Our Lady of the Crag. It will be marked by a



fund-raising effort for much needed restorative work on the knight carving. The current estimate is approaching £10,000.

Using the acronym **ROCK** (Restore Our Chapel Knight), the plan is to organise a number of events on the 15<sup>th</sup> July 2008, with local groups and schools contributing. Knaresborough House will be the venue for displays, talks and refreshments. There will be an ecumenical service at the Shrine along with displays of artwork.

## Historical note

The Chapel was carved out of the rock in about 1408 by 'John the Mason', and is believed to be the third oldest wayside shrine in

Britain. John was a local stonemason who worked in the nearby quarry. One day his son was playing on the rocky cliff when there was a great downfall of stones and boulders. The father of the boy attributed his son's narrow escape from death as a miraculous intervention by the Virgin Mary and is said to have built the shrine in thanksgiving and dedicated it to the Blessed Virgin.

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## SPOTLIGHT on Shrine of Our Lady of the Crag Working Group

The group was set up in March 1997 when a St Mary's parishioner, who had looked after the chapel personally, left the area. We had a partnership with the



Advent Mass Dec 2006

'Sacred Land Project', a national organisation based in Manchester promoting the building and maintaining of sacred places, and linking this work with environmental concerns. This partnership started with a visit from Radio 4, who recorded their morning worship from St Mary's, Knaresborough for Palm Sunday, 1997.

Since then, the group of never fewer than six members has met at least once every two months. The group is made up of local people, some of whom have lived in Knaresborough all their lives. The regular activities we organise are:

- **Worship at the chapel 4 times a year (mostly Catholic, but some ecumenical);**
- **Opening of the chapel from 2-4 p.m. on Summer Sundays;**
  - **Receiving visitors who wish to come for prayer and pilgrimage purposes;**
  - **Fund raising events, such as quiz nights at St Mary's;**
- **The writing of an information booklet, which is on sale in the town;**
- **The upkeep and enhancement of the garden.**

All money from booklet sales or donated by visitors goes towards the upkeep of the chapel.

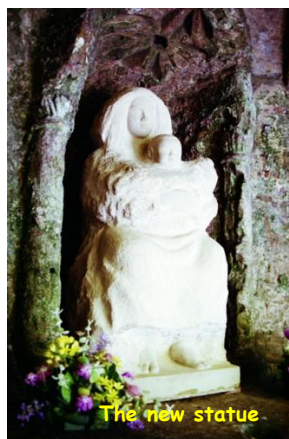
During June-July 2000, in partnership with the 'Sacred Land' Project, we held a Millennium event which included:

- **A poetry competition for local school**

children, which was judged by nationally known poets. The best were published in a book entitled Songs of Sacred Places;

- **Art workshops both for the local Art Society, and for people with learning disabilities. An exhibition was opened by the then mayor at the Methodist Hall on Gracious Street;**
- **The unveiling of a new statue by well-known Yorkshire sculptor Ian Judd, which was consecrated by the Abbot of Ampleforth on 1<sup>st</sup> July. The**

previous statue is now on display in the church garden.



The new statue.

In March 2001 we added a handrail making climbing steps up to the chapel safer. We always repair the

results of vandalism to the windows as soon as we can. It takes time, as we have to go through specialist glazers, and check work with the Historic Churches' Commission first. This year we added a protective grill over the windows.

## The Rule of St Benedict

Chapter 6 deals with silence, recommending moderation in the use of speech, but by no means prohibiting profitable or necessary conversation.

### Rule. Chapter 6

Let us do what the Prophet says:

"I said, 'I will guard my ways,  
that I may not sin with my tongue.  
I have set a guard to my mouth.'

I was mute and was humbled,  
and kept silence even from good things" (Ps. 38[39][39]:2-3).

Here the Prophet shows that if the spirit of silence ought to lead us at times to refrain even from good speech, so much the more ought the punishment for sin make us avoid evil words.

Therefore, since the spirit of silence is so important, permission to speak should rarely be granted even to perfect disciples, even though it be for good, holy edifying conversation; for it is written, "In much speaking you will not escape sin" (Prov. 1:19), and in another place, "Death and life are in the power of the tongue" (Prov. 18:21).

For speaking and teaching belong to the mistress; the disciple's part is to be silent and to listen.

And for that reason if anything has to be asked of the Superior, it should be asked with all the humility and submission inspired by reverence.

But as for coarse jests and idle words or words that move to laughter, these we condemn everywhere with a perpetual ban, and for such conversation we do not permit a disciple to open her mouth.

### Update on Parish Youth

In the last parish newsletter, there was a spotlight on the Parish Youth and the ideas for a new Youth Club for those aged 11-14. We are delighted to report that Vivalafun Youth Club is now up and running and is doing fantastically well! It runs every other Sunday after the evening Mass and regularly attracts between 20 and 30 young people.

The small group of adults who helped to set up Vivalafun worked hard over the summer months to ensure that everything

was in place for a September start. This included arranging an introductory disco in July and organising equipment such as computers for the Youth Club itself.

The young people have enjoyed the sessions, including one in church about a wedding and marriage! They have also been included in the Christmas Vigil Mass. Quotes from the young people about the Youth Club include:

"It's really entertaining because there are lots of things to do."

"It's a good place to hang out with your friends and laugh and joke."

"People get to watch me play pool which is quite amusing!"

In the New Year, the Youth Club will be open on 13<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> January, 10<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> February, 9<sup>th</sup> March and 13<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> April. There are also plans to visit a Drama Workshop, a trip to Carlton Lodge for an activity day and a Stayawake event!

Thank you for all your prayers that have helped us so far and please continue to remember us!

## More Church bloopers!

These items actually appeared in church bulletins or were announced during services:

At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be "what is Hell?" come early and listen to our choir practice.

Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person you want remembered.

Potluck supper Sunday at 5:00pm-prayer and medication to follow.

The ladies of the Church have cast-off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the basement on Friday afternoon.

This evening at 7:00pm there will be a hymn-singing in the park across from the church. Bring a blanket and come prepared to sin.

The low Self Esteem Support Group will meet on Thursday at 7pm. Please use the back door.

Year 8 will be presenting Shakespeare's Hamlet in the church basement on Friday at 7pm. The congregation is invited to attend this tragedy.

Weight Watchers will meet at 7pm at the First Presbyterian Church. Please use large double door at the side entrance.

The associate minister unveiled the Church's new tithing campaign slogan last Sunday: I upped my pledge... Now up yours!

## St Mary's Pastoral Parish Council

The St Mary's Pastoral Parish Council serves to support the Priest and the wider Parish Community in the work of running the Church. The Council manages the pastoral work that is so important in delivering help and support to our parishioners, and the wider community both locally and globally. The Parish Council is made up of a number of committees each with its own area of responsibility. The committees look after a range of charities and good causes, for example, Faith and Light, which works to support the disabled members of our Parish. The Parish Council meets four times a year. During these meetings each committee updates the Parish Council and Parish Priest with the work that has been a taking place during the previous three months. Minutes from these meetings are published and presented in the Atrium for all members of the Parish to read. Membership of the parish council is open to all Parishioners and new members who would like

to become involved with these good causes are always very welcome. Bear in mind the more people who come forward the better and the amount of time you would have to give up can be minimal. Please feel free to contact Father George if you wish to pursue this further.

## Contact Database

Many thanks to all who completed contact database forms in the Autumn. So far we have received contact details for 384 parishioners in 172 households. If you have not yet taken the opportunity to complete a form, they are available from Father George or can be downloaded from the Parish website [www.knaresborough.co.uk/stmaryrcchurch](http://www.knaresborough.co.uk/stmaryrcchurch) Your co-operation is appreciated; the database will become a very useful record for Father George and the Parish.

A man: God, how much is a million pounds to you?  
God: It is but a penny.  
A man: God, how long is a million years to you?  
God: It is but a second.  
A man: God, could you please give me a penny?  
God: Sure, just a second.