

The Grapevine

November 2015

CATHOLIC PARISH OF THE SACRED HEART
IN ST IVES

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MASS TIMES

Saturday (Vigil Mass) - 5.00 pm

Sunday - 8.00 am, 11.00 am

Weekdays

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday - 10.00 am

Thursday 8.30 am.

Mass in Polish - 2nd and 4th Sundays at 1.00 pm

Holy Days of Obligation

Mass at 10.00 am and 8.00 pm

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Saturday - 4.15 - 4.45 pm

MORNING PRAYER

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday - 9.40 am

EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Wednesday - 10.30 - 11.00 am

First Friday of the month - 9.30 - 10.00 am

DEVOTION TO OUR LADY OF LA SALETTE

Third Monday of the month after the Mass

PARISH OFFICE

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday -
8.30 am - 12.30 pm

Twinned with the Parish of Our Lady Mother of Sorrows, Aboud, Palestine

Served by Missionaries of Our Lady of La Salette:

Telephone: 01480 462192;

Reg. Charity No. 278742;

Co-op Share Number 272608

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The cover: front: 11 am Sunday Mass; back: The Basilica at La Salette



Church of the Nativity, Bethlehem

Thursday 22nd October - Our last day started with a return to Jerusalem to visit the Upper Room of the Last Supper, the tomb of King David, the site of the Dormition of our Lady, the Church of St Peter in Gallicantu (where Peter denied Jesus three times before the cock crew) and the ancient steps

that Our Lord would have climbed. A very special place for us. We then travelled to Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum where we visited the Children's memorial – a dimly lit building which has been designed with millions of candle lights reflected in mirrors as the names of all the dead children are slowly read out. A simple and heart rending reminder of man's inhumanity. We then visited the Church of the Visitation at Ein Karem where Mary visited Elizabeth before continuing to our last stop on our pilgrimage, Abu Ghosh, where we visited the Crusader church built on one of the traditional sites of "Emmaus". There we sang "On the journey to Emmaus" in yet another church with fantastic acoustics.

We seemed to have been in the Holy Land for a long time but all too soon we were back at Tel Aviv airport waiting for our return flight. We had all experienced many emotions during our pilgrimage – awe, wonder, anger, sorrow, compassion, humility and prayerfulness. As a group of friends we had great fun and much laughter. We shared spiritual experiences. We had met amazing people and heard stories both upsetting and uplifting. We would all do it again and plan to do just that!

We must give thanks for having such wonderful friends who shared our pilgrimage and especially to Fr Paul Maddison and "Pilgrimage People" for the amazing organisation and knowledge of the Holy Land and its people.

Kathy and Paul Bishop

DEAR PARISHIONERS



Thank you for the most warm welcome offered to me when I arrived as newly appointed parish priest in January this year and for the ongoing support I have received from you since then. It is no secret that the Sacred Heart Parish of St Ives is the community which will be witnessing and proving my being a parish priest for the first time in my life.

You welcomed as well seminarians, Wojtek Wicher MS and Damian Rozum MS, who visited the parish in August and November respectively. Both had visited England before but here, in St Ives, it was their first opportunity to gain experience of pastoral work abroad, as well as improving their vocation as La Salette Missionaries – thanks to your amiable support. They are most grateful for your hospitality.

During the summer, Fr Osita Asogwa from Nigeria - who is studying philosophy in Rome - came to the parish as a supply priest. He enjoyed his first visit to England and especially the welcome he received from all at the Sacred Heart, as you can see from his letter on page 39.

I am sure you will join me in welcoming Mrs Rosalind Bubb to her new post as Parish Administrator, when she takes up the role on the 17th of November 2015. Rosalind succeeds Mrs Veronica Boland whom many of you will know. Veronica has done a brilliant job as Parish Administrator since February 2014, when she returned to the parish (from retirement!) to help my predecessor, Fr Edward Trędota MS. We all wish you, Veronica, a long, healthy and happy retirement.

We are in Advent, preparing for Christmas, which brings us this year a Jubilee of Mercy commencing on 8th December 2015. There are great challenges towards those who do not believe or no longer practise their faith, but also a remarkable opportunity to reflect on our own conversion and the deepening of our faith. There will be many activities arranged by the diocese in the course of this Jubilee Year, along with our own events, but all of them are the endeavours of the New Evangelization recommended by Pope Francis. We will all do our best to follow that way.

We should increase our efforts and prayer for vocations to the priesthood, and in particular to the Congregation of the Missionaries of Our Lady of La Salette. The area of twenty-seven villages in our parish requires two priests; the continued presence of only one demands different organization of the pastoral work. I count on your fraternal support in that matter in order to "not grieving the Holy Spirit" (Ephesians 4:30) because the community is the mutual and charitable work towards the same goal: Kingdom of God!

May Jesus Christ endow on each and every one of the readers of *The Grapevine* His grace and mercy and may the Blessed Virgin Mary, who appeared at La Salette in tears asking for our conversion towards God, intercede continuously for us.

With prayer and blessing,

Fr Karol Porczak MS

Parish Priest

“The Book of Nature is One and Indivisible”

Pope Francis recently published *Laudato Si*, an encyclical on the environment which clearly illustrates the need for immediate and effective human action against climate change. The Holy Father’s comments contribute to a long tradition of the Church’s advocacy to protect the environment, based on a fundamental principle of our faith that the Earth and everything in it is a gift, entrusted to us by God for the flourishing of life. We are stewards of a beautiful world but greed and violence have inflicted critical damage on it and we are now at a crisis point. There is no room for apathy or inaction. This idea was supported by Sir David Attenborough this year in a TV documentary showing an interview between himself and Barack Obama, President of the United States. The prolific naturalist broadcaster stated that from his first-hand experience, it is clear that despite an astonishing resilience which he has observed in the natural world, the rate of destruction is becoming too difficult for it to renew itself.

On 17th June I attended a day of action in Westminster based on a campaign known as ‘For the Love of’. It is organised by the Climate Coalition, which is made up of over 1,000 organisations, including CAFOD, Friends of the Earth and WWF. Each organisation has a particular ‘love’ that has been, and will continue to be, affected by the changes which are rapidly occurring to our environment. From the ocean, to coffee, to football, to grandchildren – there are countless causes which emphasise how the environment is a precarious and precious resource which we cannot afford to lose. The aim of the day was to lobby as many MPs as possible by demonstrating our concern for our environment and the lack of action being taken to protect it from further deterioration. Over 10,000 people from all over the UK attended, and events during the day included an ecumenical service at St Margaret’s Church, a location which is deeply rooted in the cross-pollination of politics and religious faith; a lobby on Lambeth Bridge where MPs who chose to meet with their constituents were escorted by rickshaw; art installations, and finally a rally with speakers such as comedian Arthur Smith, Great British sportspeople and a representative from the Grandparents against Climate Change group.

The day was both informative and a very positive experience. Before attending, I knew that climate change was a problem which seems to have left the political agenda whilst still causing many problems for our natural ecosystems and our brothers and sisters in the third world. I was unsure of how to take action,

together to buy another much needed guitar.

Tuesday 20th Oct – We entered the Church of the Nativity through the Door of Humility and celebrated Mass in St Catherine’s chapel. After Mass we had a tour of the basilica (the oldest church in the world!). As the queue to visit the grotto marking the place of Jesus’ birth was already building up before it had even opened, we decided to return at the end of our day. So we continued to the BASR (Bethlehem Arab Society for Rehabilitation) hospital in Beit Jala to learn about the work of this rehabilitation centre from the Director, Edmund Shehadeh. Edmund is passionate about the work of this hospital which he describes as an “inclusive development based on a human rights approach to disability”. He says that “Although we find ourselves in the heart of one of the most troubled areas of the world, we hope that through our work and partnership with national and international communities, we can make one of those small gestures that make a difference”. He is an inspiring individual who continues to work with determination to ensure health care is brought to all those who need it. We had lunch in the hospital cafeteria and then drove to Herodium, the desert fortress reputed to be the burial place of King Herod. This involved a steep climb to the top but we were rewarded by the wonderful view and then we descended by a series of staircases through the cisterns, where water used to be stored, to the exit. On our return journey we visited the “Shepherd’s fields” where the angels appeared and told the shepherds the joyous tidings then we too hurried back to the Church of the Nativity to visit the cave where Jesus Christ was born. By then it was dark and we enjoyed a visit to the noisy, bustling shops in the “suk” in Bethlehem before we returned to our hotel for dinner.

Wednesday 21st Oct – Today we crossed through the check point between Bethlehem and Jerusalem for a full day walking tour of the holy sites starting at the top of the Mount of Olives at the church of Our Father where you can see the Lord’s prayer in every language and retracing the walk of Palm Sunday we visited the church of Dominus Flevit (the Lord wept) and on to the garden of Gethsemane and its ancient olive trees beside the Church of All Nations. The beautiful stained glass windows have been designed to give the effect that it is always evening. We continued our walk into the Old City and after lunch we visited the Church of St Anne’s with its amazing acoustics and the nearby pool of Bethesda. Next we walked the Via Dolorosa and marked the Stations of the Cross ending at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. This involved walking through the Suk with all its noise and activity just as it would have been in Jesus’ day. Still a very moving experience even though a young Jewish man passed us saying that we “were being told lies”. A visit to the Western Wall concluded our day and we returned to Bethlehem and a night out at a Bedouin restaurant. The meal was a feast of Arab cuisine and Paul and I were totally surprised when they brought in a birthday cake topped with candles sparking and sparkling as if about to explode! It was a wonderful occasion for our last evening.

exception of a brief period of occupation by the Crusaders in the twelfth century. It was rediscovered by the West in 1812 by a Swiss explorer J.L. Burckhardt. We walked for a couple of hours, through the Siq to the Treasury and marvelled at the rock carvings and buildings carved from the rock. Then onwards to the Royal Tombs, Nymphaeum, Colonnaded Street and Theatre. The whole day was an amazing experience and after a very welcome stop for lunch we began the long walk back to the entrance and our coach for the journey back to our hotel in Amman. Despite the heat none of us succumbed to the temptation of a horse or camel ride or were enthusiastic enough to walk for another hour to climb the 800 steps to the monastery – leaving that pleasure for another trip! We returned to our hotel in Amman and found that one of the nuns had brought us all pomegranates from her garden at home. They were the biggest we had ever seen!

Sunday 18th Oct - After breakfast we celebrated Mass in the Rosary Sisters' church which was very conveniently next door to our hotel! The singing was magnificent resounding around the church. Like us, they have coffee after Mass but they have it outside in the glorious sunshine beneath a blue, blue sky! We had delicious biscuits and chocolates and they were most surprised that we did not have chocolates after Mass (please take note Fr Karol!!). Everyone made us feel very welcome and some of our group found some surprising connections among the parishioners. We had lunch in one of Amman's top restaurants where they even peel your orange for you! In the afternoon we toured the site of Amman visiting the Roman Amphitheatre and Citadel. That evening we decided to attempt to "juice" the pomegranates as we had all enjoyed this drink at various places in our travels. Various methods were tried out (having no juicer to hand) some with more success than others, but the resulting mess ... well you can imagine! The sisters were not entirely amused by our activities! Next day we found cartons of pomegranate juice at the breakfast table. They obviously thought this a safer option!

Monday 19th Oct – Today we left Amman and crossed the Allenby Bridge back in to Israel and to the Dead Sea where we had lunch and then floated around in the warm water and covered ourselves in the mud in the hope of beautifying our skin! We then travelled to the oldest city in the world – Jericho – where we saw the ancient ruins and visited Mount Temptation where Jesus resisted the devil's temptations. Leaving Jericho, we travelled upwards towards Bethlehem stopping at Bethany and the traditional tomb of Lazarus. We called in to the Palestinian Centre for Rapprochement (PCR) on our way to our hotel close to Manger Square. The PCR is working to bridge the gap between Palestinians and people around the world by showing them how Palestinians are forced to live under occupation therefore empowering them for non-violent direct action. We visited the "Tunes for Peace" project which gives Palestinians access to professional music tuition. Our group was so moved by the work of this department in helping the children that we all got

however, and genuinely doubted whether we were in a situation of too little, too late. Meeting a variety of people throughout the day in London showed me that this is not the case. With the right political focus and funding it is a realistic achievement to produce the majority of energy this country needs from clean and renewable resources, within a decade or two. The benefits of this are far-reaching, intrinsically connecting the environment and the economy. For example, by implementing energy-efficiency schemes in existing housing stock and by embedding them into new homes as standard, we can be less dependent on a fluctuating and insecure energy market, reduce the effects of fossil fuels and excess carbon in our environment and support the poorest in our society by providing stable, cheaper energy sources.

Personally, I found one of the most impactful moments of the day to be during the service at St Margaret's, when a CAFOD worker from Nigeria explained the difficulties facing farmers there as a direct result of global warming. They are no longer able to predict the seasons and harvest patterns of their crops, as they once did, and significant investment in technology is required to counter this. Another key memory is the sense of pride I felt as I looked around the joyful rally on Millbank in the evening sunshine and took in the sheer volume of people that surrounded me, of every age and background, some of whom had travelled a great distance. The common feature I observed was the passion etched on their faces - passion for protecting the environment, based on a deep love for the life we have been lucky enough to enjoy. There is a real possibility that if we continue down our current path and do not take the messages of Pope Francis and scientists to heart, our descendants will not see the world as we do. It will be significantly changed and much of what we love could be lost. We have the opportunity to be the generation that didn't stand back and let it happen, but proudly stepped up to the challenge of halting a swift and reckless path to destruction. It is not enough to slightly reduce carbon emissions, or to attempt to restrict global temperature rises to a smaller number of degrees. There is no longer a debate about whether human action is the most significant contributor to climate change. Only human action can make a difference now.

If you are interested in finding out more about the Climate Coalition, and the ways in which you can join the fight against climate change, visit www.fortheloveof.org.uk

I am setting up a local group in our region which will aim to raise awareness about the effects of climate change and to put pressure on our MPs to make a real commitment to ambitious targets at the UN Climate Change Conference in December, firmly pushing the issue back to the urgent political agenda. If you too are concerned, contact me on the telephone number below. There is also information available at our website www.cleangreen.org.uk

Laura Mitcham Tel: 01480 300427

Immigration Issues - A Moral Dilemma?

Immigration into the UK has been an issue that has worried me from an economic and political perspective for many years and my concerns have been exacerbated by recent headlines about battles to cross from Calais. Thoughts for this piece have been developing over recent months, when I had in mind presenting the issues as a dilemma between national policy and a Christian perspective. In fact, thinking through the issue from a Christian perspective has led me to a simpler conclusion, different from what I expected, which I would like to share with you.

Like any politician or government official, I would preface my remarks by stating that I am not a racist! I genuinely believe that my concerns derive purely from the numbers that the country can economically sustain. The basic facts that I grew up with were that the national population when I was born (in the 1940s) was well under 50 million and that the UK needed to export manufactured goods and services (mainly to Commonwealth countries) to feed itself. Today the population is just short of 65 million and our economy looks decreasingly able to continue to buy in enough food in the longer term. So my concern about population size is based on the number we can feed, not where they originate from.

On a wider platform, perhaps the European Union is better able to feed all its residents, as a trade-off against unrestricted border crossings – but that is a different issue. Globally the fundamental issue is whether the world can feed a continually growing population. Climate change is another problem, but global warming is simply moving the world towards the limits of sustainability faster, as is already obvious in northern Africa ... and hence, back to the UK immigration issue!



Thursday 15th October - We travelled to Jordan. Originally the plan was to cross at the Sheik Hussein Border. However, 15th October was the Muslim New Year and this crossing had been closed for the occasion so we had to travel to the King Hussein Bridge (Allenby Bridge) crossing, which for some reason was open! There we transferred onto another coach and picked up our new guide Marwan. We then made our way to Jaresh which is to the north of Amman. Jaresh is one of the best preserved Roman cities outside Italy and we spent a few hours exploring the beautiful ruins – the Arch of Hadrian, the Cardo, the oval Forum, the Temple of Zeus and much more. We then travelled on to arrive at our accommodation with the Rosary Sisters in Amman. This was

a lovely modern guest house, originally designed for the care of elderly nuns – ideal for weary British travellers!

Friday 16th Oct – This morning we drove to the Baptism Site at “Bethany beyond the Jordan”. On previous occasions we had been to the site on the Israel side and it was strange to look across the river Jordan to the other side just a few metres away! There we saw some brave/foolhardy pilgrims engaging in total immersion in the very murky waters of the Jordan! We then travelled on to Madaba where we visited the St George monastery and saw the world’s oldest preserved mosaic map of Jerusalem and other sacred places dating from the sixth century. After lunch we continued our journey to Mount Nebo - the traditional place of Moses’ burial. Moses is said to have surveyed the Promised Land from here - the land that he was not to enter. From there we finished our day’s travels by reaching Petra and our hotel for the night.

Saturday 17th Oct – We made an early start and arrived at the Petra site just after 7am when the temperatures had yet to soar to 32 deg C. Petra, known as the “rose red city half as old as time”, is a unique and ancient city of red and pink stone which has been occupied for thousands of years. First of all people lived in caves and simple dwellings and it is thought that the city began to acquire the larger monuments and luxury homes towards the end of the first century B.C. After an earthquake in AD 551 and conquest by the Arabs in AD 636 the city was deserted and sank slowly into oblivion with the

Celebrating and Marking Special Birthdays!

This year Paul and I both celebrate significant birthdays. We knew that we would be marking the event with our children, our granddaughter and with the wider family in various ways, but we felt that we would like to do something else. Independently, we had both thought about a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and the evening we started to discuss this, a very good friend telephoned to say that he was now retired and would like to go to the Holy Land. This had to be a sign from above that this pilgrimage was meant to happen! So we asked friends from around the United Kingdom and from various Christian traditions if they would like to join us in our celebration pilgrimage. There was no doubt who was going to organise the pilgrimage. It had to be our very good friend, Fr Paul Maddison from Pilgrimage People. Paul and I drew up a list of all the places we wanted to visit and Fr Paul arranged the itinerary. So on the morning of 12th October 2015 twelve bleary eyed pilgrim friends met at Luton airport to start the journey.

Monday 12th Oct – We arrived at Tel Aviv airport then continued by coach, with our guide Makhoul, to our hotel in Nazareth. We stayed with the Rosary Sisters where we enjoyed spectacular views over the city from the outside seating area while sipping Cremisan wine. Cremisan wine is made near Bethlehem.

Tuesday 13th Oct – We travelled to the shore of Lake Galilee where Jesus shared breakfast with his disciples after his resurrection, then on to the site of the feeding of the five thousand, followed by Capernaum, which is central to the ministry of Jesus. There we visited the synagogue, excavations of the house of St Peter and the modern octagonal church above the archaeological site. For lunch we sampled some Arab cuisine and then took a boat ride on the Sea of Galilee. It was a beautiful day, but we could all feel the possibility of the wind increasing to a storm and Jesus calming the sea.

Wednesday 14th Oct – Our first destination was Cana where Jesus performed his first miracle at the wedding feast. Sadly our bottles of water did not miraculously change into wine! Fr Paul conducted a short service in the beautiful garden chapel where he gave a blessing to those of us already married, about to be married or who had lost their loved one. It was a very moving occasion. Returning to Nazareth we went to the Basilica of the Annunciation which is built over the traditional site of the house of Mary. From there we toured Nazareth visiting the site of Joseph's workshop and the synagogue where Jesus proclaimed his determination to bring the Good News to the poor and set the down trodden free. After another stupendous Arab lunch we headed off to Mount Tabor, the site of the transfiguration, which is reached by a very speedy taxi ride around multiple hairpin bends to the top! The views from here are magnificent; across the plain of Armageddon to the Galilee Hills. And at the bottom of Mount Tabor we found a magic potion:

So my mindset before starting this article was that the UK needs to control its population size to stop our grandchildren starving, which seemed to justify any action short of genocide, or state control of birth rates à la China. Meanwhile the news from the Mediterranean and, closer to home, from Calais, seems to imply a growing “swarm” (to use David Cameron's pejorative term) flooding into the UK - illegal immigrants or asylum seekers, depending on their situation and your prejudices.

Latterly, more detailed reports and less biased speakers (and thinking about this article) made me start to consider these “immigrants” as people, and my reaction to them as a Christian. All the readings, and Fr Ivan's sermon at Mass on the 19th Sunday in Ordinary time: Elija in the wilderness; St Paul to the Ephesians “Be friends with one another, and kind, ...; the gospel “I am the living bread ...” – gave me a simple answer, which cut through my dilemma.

Thinking of each refugee as the man going to Jericho who fell into the hands of robbers, who should we imitate on finding him: the priest who passed by on the other side; the Levite who did the same; or the Good Samaritan? Our answer as followers of Christ is obvious. We should not only let them into the country without undue hindrance, but also treat their wounds, transport them to safety, then take care of them. I noted that the Good Samaritan used his own money to pay an inn-keeper to take care of the victim: we collectively, ie the nation, have the resources (from our taxes) to do that.

And what of my starving grandchildren? Well, their future difficulties are my imagined ones, which hopefully the Lord will provide for when the time comes, whereas the people in “The Jungle” have already suffered disasters for their families in their home countries and given up everything to get to our border. They have real problems, now, which we can help with. As my old maths master used to say: Q.E.D. – Quad Erat Demonstrandum = “which had to be proven” or “**the answer**”.

Addendum

I wrote the above in mid-August, when we were hearing about a “big problem” for the UK, with about 3,000 refugees trying to cross the Channel. And I didn't comment on how we could help do something for them – frankly, short of charitable donations, I didn't have a clue.

How quickly the world changes! This week – at the end of September – we are contemplating about a million refugees walking across Europe, most of them

going to Germany. David Cameron has given us a clue about one thing that we can do about it – as a practical politician he has responded to growing pressure of public opinion. In my view he/we/the UK is still not doing nearly enough, but we can keep the pressure on by making our opinions known, through our individual and collective voices.


What should that pressure be? Firstly to endorse the move to provide greater support to the refugee camps of people who have not yet given up and moved into Europe, but insist that more is needed. As ever, we can supplement governmental aid with carefully selected charitable donations (with Gift Aid from tax payers).

But that does not do anything for those who have already taken the plunge and are desperate in Europe, so we should also be pressing our government to participate in a Europe-wide deal on taking asylum seekers. (Returning to my original theme, I still think such a plan should not provide an open door to those who are simply economic migrants and should certainly bar anyone motivated by political or religious intolerance.)

Finally we should be seeking to help those ending up in the UK: through central and local government aid, plus our own financial support through selected charities, possibly with more direct assistance to any that end up on our doorstep.

By the time you read this in *The Grapevine* the situation will surely have changed again! So do think about the new situation and if there is any other appropriate action.

David Kerr



Nativity Play

Sunday 13th December
at 3 pm
followed by a visit from a
man in a red coat!
All Welcome

Christ who said “Whatever you do to the least of my brothers (and sisters), that you do unto me”. And I really think of how much the world would be a better place if people lived above individual differences, racial divides and religious boundaries; if we all shun the danger of “a single story” that clouds our visions of persons and peoples, and rather embrace every human person for who she/he truly is: “Imago Dei” (The image of God).

To conclude, permit me to share an experience I had with one professor when I went for a sick call. After the administration of the Sacraments, I was chatting with him about his professional life, having heard he made some life-saving invention. After telling me briefly about it, he said to me that his world now revolves around his bedroom and study room, but that he expects the best from God. I asked how and he joked: ‘Oh, when I get there, I will remind God: “While on earth I helped you save many lives through my research. And now, it’s your turn to save mine”. We all laughed quite loudly! But, I didn’t lose the message: What is life if not lived for the other? What better fulfilment than the courage to meet one’s Creator confident that one had made a decisive impact in His world and in the lives of people?

Indeed, looking back at my stay with the good people of St. Ives, I wonder if my little effort added some quality to someone’s life and happiness. But I am sure theirs did very much to my life and disposition, so much so that on parting, I obviously felt nostalgic. Mine was indeed an experience I will treasure for a long time to come!

Fr Osita

CONFIRMATION

Confirmation will take place on
Monday, 16th May 2016 at 6 pm.
Bishop Alan Hopes will be coming and we
hope that everyone in the parish will
support this event.
At the moment we have nine candidates.

It was not only about the Mass. I found to my surprise that women organize themselves to clean the Church, decorate the sanctuary and undertake other voluntary services. Besides, there were young boys and girls, some high school and even married adults, who come around to serve at Mass. Such is also the case with those who organize themselves as choristers at Mass. (Needless to say, I enjoyed the 11am Mass on Sundays so much that I didn't wish it to end.) But one is given the impression that such voluntary services do not obtain around Europe, as they do in such places as Nigeria. To add to this, the Communion service to the sick by some devout laymen and women so beautifully helps to bring succour and smiles on the faces of the sick. We do not have this back home.

Be that as it may, it was indeed interesting staying in the presbytery in a style very different from what I am used to at home. In Nigeria, for instance, the presbyteries are often inhabited by the priest(s) and household assistants, and quite busy with people and activities. But it was a different scenario altogether, having to stay all alone, taking care of personal needs in the house and kitchen, having to get things ready for Masses and taking care of the Church before and after Mass. These were great sources of personal experience which are rarely available for priests back home. It was also a great experience meeting Fr. Ivan, the energetic priest-convert from the Anglican Communion, and personally witnessing what I had read about such enriching ecclesial arrangements. In fact, I wonder if I ever had a topic so much commented on/disputed by friends (mostly Nigerians) when I shared that very experience on my Facebook wall. Naturally, it would sound so novel, if not strange, for the average Nigerian Catholic.

Of course, the story of my six-week stay at St. Ives cannot be exhausted here and I don't wish to bore you with unnecessary details either. Suffice it to say that I really enjoyed the warmth of the people: their welcoming mien, encouraging smiles and hearty compliments. Many invited me for meals where I had nice home experiences, while others took me out on tours of interesting places: museums, Cambridge environs, parks and even drama nights. From all of these, I came to know the people more closely to confirm my conviction that human beings are the same everywhere, lovely and loving when inundated by the love of Christ. I experienced love, so palpable that I could touch it. And much so because, I think, the people were able to look beyond our accidental differences and recognized in me, the Lord Jesus

Marriage Care

I have been volunteering as a Marriage Care Provider for nearly three years. "What is Marriage Care?", you may ask. It is a day for couples preparing for married life and the marriage ceremony.

I am a facilitator for the course held by Marriage Care at Our Lady and St Etheldreda in Newmarket. Many priests ask for a certificate of attendance as part of the marriage preparations. It is important for the couple to take time and effort to attend something which will change their lives for ever.

The hall we work in is a large, light and airy room where attendees are welcomed and provided with tea and coffee. The attendant couples are diverse: some are marrying in their original country; some have been living together for quite a few years and some have their own children. One of them is always a Catholic; the other may not even believe in God. They have come because they want their marriage to succeed and for it to be fit to last a lifetime. That is what we all have in common.

There is a PowerPoint sequence and small group sessions, questionnaires and couple sessions, and the information is presented in an attractive, informative way. I share this presentation with another volunteer and we take it in turns to present a session. These sessions include:

The importance of talking and listening; how to negotiate and solve problems; the way your family and childhood influence how you interact with each other; and what you expect from your relationship. The couples have an A4 folder which they can take home, with useful handouts and information on marriage. No one is forced to share anything they are uncomfortable with. Luckily, there are usually some extroverts who don't mind reading out loud for the feedback at the end of some sessions.

The vision for Marriage Care is that adults can build and sustain a strong, fulfilling, healthy couple relationship.

In the afternoon we run through the sacrament of marriage and the vows, the important parts of the church ceremony, and the religious and public commitment this encompasses. There is music and candles and the vows are spoken and the atmosphere becomes spiritual. My favourite part of the day is when the couples exchange their 'sunshine cards', which they have completed after each session and then give to their partner at the end of the day. These are

answers to: “Something that is important to you that makes you different; something you have achieved that pleases me; a quality in you that helps us get on well together; the quality I most love in you... and more!” Maybe you can try and answer these questions about your husband/wife and swap them as a couple exercise today?

We finish with a prayer and wish everyone a long and happy marriage. Then we clear away and are helped by the couples, who are by now very chatty. Then we read the feedback forms, which are usually good, but sometimes someone has found something not useful. These forms are then forwarded to the headquarters.

If you think you would like to do this as a volunteer, about four times a year, and be trained (and also supported by the local group) go on the website www.marriagecare.org.uk or talk to me, *Heather Wells*.

Autumn Club Dates

Wednesday, 25th November

at 2 pm

Rosemary Hill will be coming to give us a talk on
her pilgrimage journey from
Somersham to Santiago De Compostella by bike.

Wednesday, 9th December

at 2 pm

Christmas Party



FROM ANXIETY TO NOSTALGIA:

MY JOURNEY TO ST. IVES

Osita Thaddeus Asogwa (Rev. Fr.)

{ositaasogwa@gmail.com}

Pontifical Urban University – Rome

My stay at the Catholic Church of the Sacred Heart, St. Ives, Cambridgeshire, was my first, both in England and in the UK. I desired it and looked forward to it, not only because I hoped for an experience on another side of the globe, but also due to the special tie Britain has with my country, Nigeria. It would indeed be fun meeting the “Onye Oyibo” (roughly ‘English gentleman’) on his own soil. Yet, when it became clear it would be a reality, I caught myself being anxious: what would the people’s disposition be like? Would I be welcome? How would I manage with speaking English to the parishioners? Again, would the game be worth the candle at the end of it all? But I had one consolation: I was going as a Catholic priest, and Catholics are Catholics everywhere!

The ride from Stansted with Fr. Karol and Wojciech was quite interesting and nerve-calming, and the boat ride on the Great River Ouse the next day introduced me gradually to the people for a soft landing. Yet I didn’t fail to notice the “empty” Church at the day’s Mass, which was in line with my preconceived Nigerian mentality: “Oyibo people no longer go to the Church and those who manage to go (in England) are mostly Anglicans”! You can then imagine my bewilderment on Saturday evening, when I came out for Mass and found the Church filled to the brim with the young and the old, men and women. I also didn’t miss the silent comportment before, and their admirable sense of devotion during the Mass. That was also the case at the Masses on Sunday. Immediately the words of the famous young Nigerian novelist, Chimamanda Adichie, came to my mind: “Beware of the danger of a single story”! And indeed, much of the mistakes we make in life and relationships come when we close our minds on a people, a culture, a person, an institution. How wrong we often are, and how much of the beauty of the world we miss, by clinging to ‘a single story’.



Wojciech



Man at work

A Mother's Christmas Prayer

Dear Lord once more it's Advent time
 And Christmas is so near
 I call to mind with guilty heart
 The promises I made last year.
 Not to leave again so very late
 My Christmas preparations
 And to join in joyfully and gladly
 With your birthday celebrations
 It's always such a marathon
 Rushing around the shops
 Will I ever get it done -
 The panic never stops.
 I've wrapped the presents, written cards
 And visited the neighbours.
 With baking, cleaning, polishing,
 There's no rest from my labours.
 Then Johnny came home from school last night
 He's a king in the Christmas play.
 He needs a jewelled crown and cloak
 Will I make them now - today.
 He looked so proud and happy, Lord
 I could not bear to down him.
 But frankly Lord, in my heart of hearts
 I'd really like to crown him!
 And Sally brought home from school today
 A party invitation.
 Her face was alight with happiness
 Please - would I make her a fancy dress?
 She trusts me not to let her down,
 Perhaps I can turn her into a clown.
 But there's washing, ironing still to do
 And the Christmas cake to ice.
 I've forgotten the milkman's order again

And he's asked me for it - twice.
 But Lord, I know you can read my mind.
 You know that I love you, and try to find
 Some quiet moments in my day
 When I can talk with you and pray.
 When things are quiet, and I am able
 I love to think of that lowly stable.
 Mary and Joseph, the Child in the hay
 The Love Divine that came down that day.
 So pure, so kind, so understanding
 Giving - forgiving - yet so undemanding.
 And in that stable, there is a space
 It's always been there, for it's my place
 It's there just for me, and whatever I do,
 The scene's not complete until I am there too.
 With the shepherds and kings I can kneel before Him
 And with all of God's family, I too can adore Him.
 The thought of it gives such a wondrous feeling
 That I firmly believe that the oxen were kneeling.
 My heart is eased, my cares disappear.
 I will plan things better Lord -
 I promise - Next Year.

Written by a parishioner when she was a young, busy mum!

The line mentioning the oxen kneeling is a reference to the beautiful poem by Thomas Hardy called "The Oxen". It suggests that every Christmas Eve they kneel at midnight as on the first Christmas Eve.

Life in the Holy Spirit - A Reflection

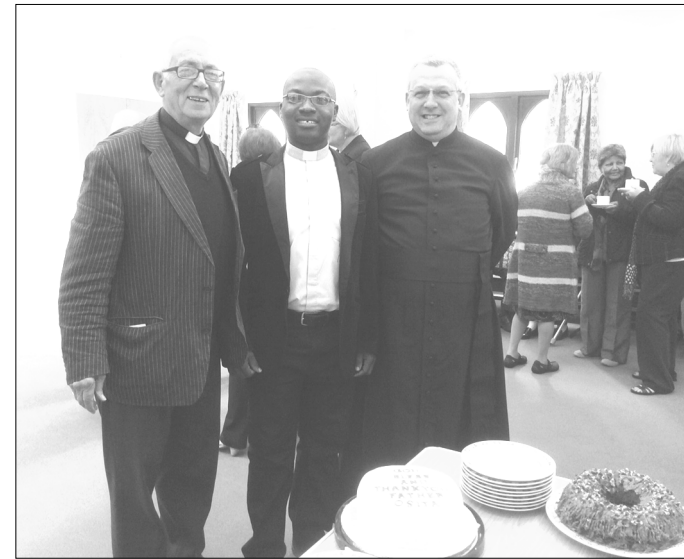
Ephesians 1:1-14

I have just returned from stunning Lake Constance at the foot of the Alps. My husband, Aidan, and his state of the art, lightweight framed wheelchair came too. It is hard to negotiate steep mountain paths these days – but you know he used to trek up mountains – so we do our best. The most fun we had was criss-crossing the lake in the splendid and elegant steamers. In doing this we criss-crossed Austria, Germany and Switzerland, for the Lake spans all three countries. The lakeside capital of Constance itself is in the southern most tip of Germany. It hasn't changed much since the middle ages and its churches, palaces and monastery still stand as a witness to the beauty of God's grace. Remember love is always bigger than a full stop. Towards the end of the second world war, when Germany was being bombed night after night, the people of Constance decided to trick the bombers. Instead of going dark and switching the lights OFF – they decided to be brave and leave all their lights ON. They had faith – they were secure in their faith – that when the bombers saw all the little twinkling lights far below, they would assume they had crossed the border into neutral Switzerland. It worked. Not a building was touched. Not a life was lost in the bombing. We too should live our lives of faith secure in this great gift of God's love – secure in the life-giving gift of the Holy Spirit.

Looking at Ephesians chapter 1 - Paul greets another beloved community – the early church – with greetings of “grace” and “peace”. Grace, bestowed on those God loves – it is totally undeserved – and it is priceless and saving. Like a waterfall of spiritual blessing, the gift of peace invariably follows on. This most beautiful of passages, becomes a eulogy – a Song of Praise – for the loving work of our creator God in our little lives. The word “blessing” comes from the Greek “eulogia” – eulogy – to speak well of, or significantly, the sharing of Bread of Life [as in the Eucharist]. And whilst the blessing we ourselves bestow on God will always be small in comparison to God's blessing on us, He takes up our little blessing and transforms it. Having become man – God in Jesus Christ – accomplishes the eternal purpose of God. Which is? To bring “grace” and “peace” into our totally undeserving and little lives. Lives of faithful twinkling lights. Lives born again. Lives of faith.

Make no mistake about it, we are and were chosen “before the foundation of the world”. We are “destined in love” to be the children of our Father. What an amazing promise! If we are His children then Jesus Christ is our brother. The

As mentioned in Fr Karol's introduction, the parish welcomed Fr Osita and Seminarians Wojciech Wicher MS and Damian Rozum MS this year, and below and overleaf are photographs of their visit.



Fr Ivan, Fr Osita and Fr Karol at Fr Osita's leaving party



Fr Karol and Damian Rozum

parish is proposing to open the church for timed visits on each of the three days and volunteers will be sought to act as welcomers. A history leaflet is also planned to provide visitors with information on our unique church. Finally, it is hoped that RIBA East (based in Cambridge) will collaborate with the parish to promote the architectural significance of “Pugin’s Little Gem”, but confirmation of RIBA’s contribution to the event is awaited. Ellen encouraged parishioners to visit the many heritage sites open in the town or further afield.

Fr Karol’s Report

Fr Karol confirmed that he was happy to be appointed parish priest and noted this was his first post as a parish priest. He identified key issues he wished to focus on in the coming months and years with the help of the parish. These included:

- A more inclusive liturgy with parishioner involvement.
- Recruiting and training more altar servers.
- Recruiting more members to the choir and offering music at other Sunday Masses.
- Updating the parish website.
- Providing a Mass in Polish on occasion with permission from the Bishop.

Fr Karol noted that a supply priest will be available in August during Fr Karol’s holiday and a La Salette seminarian will be visiting the parish from the 13th July - 23rd August.

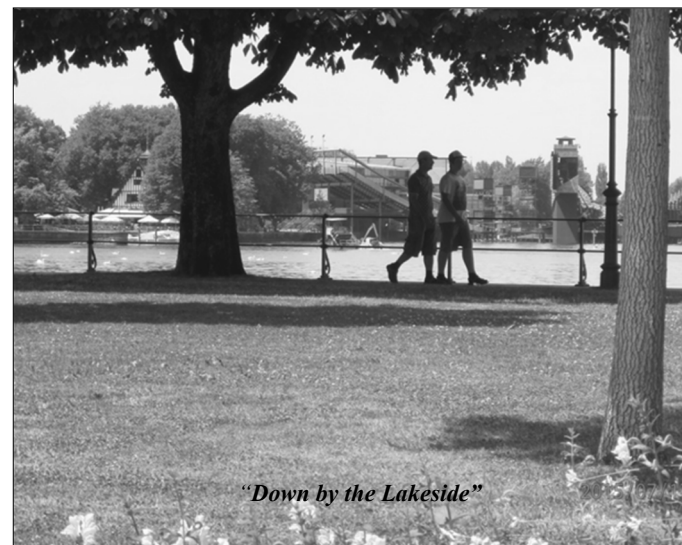
Future plans include:

- Conducting pastoral visits across the parish.
- Planning annual pilgrimages for parishioners.
- Supporting five candidates wishing to attend the World Youth Day Event in Krakow in July 2016.

Holy Spirit is our constant companion in this often “vale of tears and suffering”. Ransomed on the cross, healed through his blood, restored according to the riches of his grace, forgiven of our manifold sins – this is our spiritual armour in Christ. Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven. Let it be our mantra. Our song to sing when the going gets tough.

For this is God’s plan. Difficult for us to see in times of distress, but this is God’s plan for the end of times – “a unity of all things in him” – a unity of all things “in heaven and things on earth”. This too, is the time when, like the first shepherds, we will see and hear the angels singing to God’s glory. And we must do this too. It is true “you cannot give what you haven’t got” but we come before God with empty arms waiting to be blessed with the richness of His bounty. Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven. If God has forgiven you – if God Himself has blessed you with grace and peace – then leaving your sins at the altar in true penitence and faith, you will be ready to forgive others and yourself. You will be the guiding light God always intended you to be.

Jacqueline Tevlin



“Down by the Lakeside”

What Are We Doing On Earth For Christ's Sake?

by Richard Leonard SJ

A few years ago I wrote a review for *The Grapevine* of another book by the Australian Jesuit Priest, Richard Leonard, with the title “Where The Hell Is God?” That book offered a very interesting approach to the problem of pain and suffering. His new book deals with the arguments raised by many against our Christian faith in this modern society. Addressing the world in which Christians live, it asks who we are before God and how we can be confident in our faith in a loving God.

He explains in the preface to his latest book the extraordinary circumstances in which he came to write it. On a flight from New York to Los Angeles he was asked by the young man sitting next to him what he did. When he replied that he was a Jesuit, the man said that he had just read two books by a Jesuit priest called “Where the Hell is God?” and “Why Bother Praying”. “Do you know them?” he asked. Father Leonard replied that he had written them! The young man went on to say that much as he liked the two books, they did not address a fundamental issue for him and for most of his friends - the “Why” of belief; he said what he was struggling with is “What are we actually doing on earth, for Christ's sake”. When the man apologised for saying “For Christ's Sake”, Father Leonard said that what has now become a throwaway line does not rob it of its original meaning.

The book which emerged as a result of the subsequent conversation is not an academic treatise but a very readable approach to answering some of the major objections raised about the Christian faith. The book is divided into three chapters: in the first one he attempts to answer many of the arguments made by modern atheists such as Richard Dawkins.

His conclusion to the chapter is a wonderful story of how Christian faith should be judged by what we do rather than what we say. He describes how he, then a seminarian working in a hospital, helped a sixteen year-old pregnant girl who was dumped by her boyfriend and shunned by her family. The girl went on to have three more children to different fathers. Eventually she married the third father and both were received into the Catholic Church. The story is a lovely example of practising what we preach.

Planning Sub-Committee: David Kerr is in the second year of his second term;

RE Coordinator: Elizabeth Barker continues to occupy this role as an ex-officio member;

Finance and Buildings Committee: Ellen Kemp continues to represent the Committee on an ex-officio basis;

PSC Chair: Elizabeth Barker held the Chair for two years and was re-elected for a second term;

PSC Vice-Chair: Michael Read was elected for a second term in this position.

Group Reports

Representatives of groups present reported briefly on their groups' activities and made themselves available for individual questions and comments at the end of the meeting:

Pat Francis reported from the Music Group;

Rika Sanderson from the Social Group;

Michael Sanderson read Gina Sant's report from the SVP;

David Kerr reported on the work of the Planning Sub-Group;

Elizabeth Barker gave a report on her Religious Education role;

Michael Read provided a written report from his 5 pm Mass Representative and his local CAFOD representative roles.

Josefina Galvez-White reported on the work of the “Pilgrim Queen of the Family” local network and from the parish Children & Parents' Group.

Any Other Business

Ellen Kemp informed parishioners that the Heritage Open Days (HODS) Event organised locally by St Ives Civic Society was to be held from Friday, 11th - Sunday 13th September. The event provides free admission to a vast range of heritage sites across the country, many of which are either not open to the public at other times of the year or charge a fee for admission. (HODS is a national heritage festival organised by the National Trust in partnership with many agencies including Heritage England and for the first time this year, The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). Nationally it is a four day event starting on 10th September but only three days are celebrated in St Ives.) The

of the redundant church in Papworth Everard, formerly part of St Ives parish until its closure in 2007. If a decision is made to sell the property the parish expects to receive a percentage of the income from the sale, which would be used for the courtyard project.

Postscript: The Diocesan Trustees approved the project on 4th June. However, at the time of writing (29th October) receipt of a faculty, signed by the Bishop, is awaited from the Historic Churches Committee.

Update of the Parish Plan

David Kerr reported on how the Parish Plan, approved at the 2014 Open Meeting, had been updated according to the decisions and actions of the PSC and its member groups, and the changing situation of the parish (copy attached to the minutes). He stressed that his remarks on how the plan might be developed in 2015/2016 were a purely personal view until the new plan is discussed and agreed by the PSC. The revised plan will be presented as the “2015 Parish Plan” on the parish website after this meeting.

PSC Membership Changes

Elizabeth Barker introduced a number of membership changes of the PSC resulting from changes of group representatives, with some prompted by the constitution requirement for ordinary members to have a two-year term of membership of PSC, which can only be renewed once, as follows:

Holy Land Group: Kathy Bishop has left the group and been replaced by Fiona Smith;

5 pm Mass Representative: Michael Read was elected for a second term;

8 am Mass Representative: Tony Haddock to continue for the second year of his first term;

11 am Mass Representative: Claire Downham re-elected for a second term;

Music Group: Pat Francis is seeking a replacement representative at the end of her second term;

Social Group: Rika Sanderson re-elected for a second term;

SVP: Gina Sant is at the end of her second term and will be replaced by Carol Bewley;

The second chapter deals with some of the questions posed by his travelling companion and also by many other people; they include: “Isn’t Religion the Cause of Most Wars? How Do We Maintain Our Faith When Clergy Have Abused Children? Is the Bible True? How Can Anyone Believe in a Loving God Who Can Also Damn People To Hell? Why Not Simply Follow Your Own Moral Code?”

Once again his conclusion to the chapter is a story from his own experience; it tells what happened when a group of gay men turned up to Midnight Mass. The subsequent story is both funny and very sad but as he says, our Christian behaviour at its best is not moralising.

The final chapter is called “Witnesses of Faith, Hope and Love” in which he gives pen pictures of a number of people who have inspired him. They range from St Thomas More to Pope Francis and Father Leonard’s own family. He says that each of them, in various ways, have shown different facets of living a life of faith - in the joy that comes from it, and its cost.

The paperback book is published by the Paulist Press.

Brian O’Hare



Dates for your Diary

The Heritage Open Days Event

will be held in St Ives on

Friday 9th to Sunday 11th September 2016

Remember the Fallen

During the summer holidays, I travelled to Belgium with the Cambridgeshire Army Cadet Force (ACF). The Cambridgeshire detachments paraded at the Menin Gate, which is the most famous Commonwealth War Memorial in the World War I battlefields. It was a privilege to march and remember the soldiers who gave up their lives for our freedom. We read some of the many names on the walls next to the gate. Two Belgian firemen played “The Last Post” on the bugles. It made us all very thoughtful.

Last year was the centenary of the start of World War I and, since there are no longer any living veterans from the Great war, it is our responsibility to remember the horrors of the war and the heroes who defended our country.

Harry Robinson



Menin Gate



showed the drains had collapsed in a number of places.

Replacing the drains and repairing the fragile damaged brickwork will be expensive and provide no 'added value' for the church.

Growth of the church community: The church and extension are full every week for the Anticipatory Mass and 11am Sunday Mass and the hall is also used every week to cope with the number of parishioners attending 11am Mass, with the service relayed via a TV link. While the expanding number of parishioners is seen as a blessing, it has led to competing pressure for space, particularly at the 11am service.

Plan:

It is planned to roof the courtyard and create a new room from the redundant space, to address both problems noted above. The room will be a multi-purpose space and include use as a confessional area (with ease of access for disabled parishioners requiring a wheelchair), a meeting room, space for the children's liturgy, and a room for quiet prayer and reflection. The room will have an audio-visual link provided, but detailed work on the room specification will be completed at a later date.

Process:

An architect and civil engineer were appointed this year and drawings prepared to roof the area, removing the internal wall of the link corridor (from the presbytery to the church) to provide a large room.

A faculty application has been completed for submission to the Diocesan Historic Churches Committee (HCC) for consideration on 17th June, and a Parish Project Approval Form (PPAF) will be submitted to the Diocese Trustees for discussion on 4th June.

Payment:

The estimated cost of the project is in the region of £30K. However, detailed costs are being sought from local builders.

Several sources of funding are being explored and these include: the parish budget, a Diocesan Bond, as well as donations and interest-free loans from parishioners - as received for the solar installation in 2011, and now repaid in full.

The Diocesan Trustees are expected to make a decision in June on the future

Presentation of Parish Accounts

Paul Kent, the new parish treasurer, introduced a report on the parish accounts for 2014 (copy attached to the minutes). He started by explaining that he had recently taken over the treasurer role and proposed a vote of thanks to Tony Sloan, who had prepared the accounts for the last eighteen years, which was endorsed by the meeting.

Paul picked out key features of the accounts as increases in income from: tax rebates, as a result of wider access to Gift Aid; higher donations/grants and hall lettings. On the expenses side: property maintenance was up on 2013 (but within budget) and expenditure on salaries was down as a result of only having one priest. Another significant feature this year was that our parish had come up for an audit by the diocese auditors, which is currently in hand.

In response to questions, Paul informed the meeting that: bank account details are not included in this statement of income and expenditure; rent income for the hall was assumed to be from increased lettings, rather than price increases (rates were quoted as £10 per hour for the hall – *subsequently corrected to £12 per hour* – and £5 per hour for the use of the kitchen); the solar panel installation capital cost had now been repaid and there is a continuing income from the generation feed-in tariff – which should be reflected in the accounts, but was not included in the current statement.

Courtyard Project

Ellen Kemp presented a report on the courtyard project, giving an update on progress with the project and showing plans of the proposed new room and its roof.

The concept of roofing the courtyard was first proposed to parishioners in 2013 but was not considered a priority at that time. However, two issues have now changed the need to roof the redundant space and the project has been endorsed by the Parish Finance & Buildings Committee and the Parish Steering Committee.

'Problems':

Rising damp: was noted in January 2014 particularly affecting the walls of the church and dining room and a member of the Diocesan Historic Churches Committee visited the site on 1st February to offer advice. Action was taken to ameliorate the problem. However, a camera survey of the soakaway drains

The Robinsons Climb Robinson

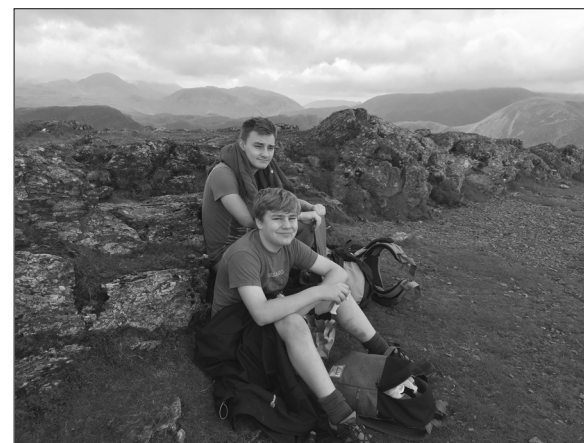
We are the Robinsons [Mum, Jack, Harry and Tom (8 o'clock mass) plus Lucy, who is a French visitor staying with us]. At the end of August, we went to Buttermere in the Lake District. We stayed in the Youth Hostel and noticed there was a mountain with our name on it, right behind the hostel. Robinson is one of the "Wainwrights", and it stands at 737m above sea level.

We set off up the mountain via High Snockrigg. It was a little struggle at first but, once I got into the rhythm, I was fine. As we went up the mountain we came across some hefted sheep; this means the ewe knew what territory was hers. A little further up the mountain we could see Bleaberry Tarn across the valley, and here we sat down for a rest. As we carried on our journey to the top we came across a bog. Wading through the wet slushy moss, the water crept into my boots.

When we got to the very top of Robinson we stopped for a bit of lunch. The view was beautiful. We could see the High Stile Range and both Crummock Water and Loweswater. Then we descended the mountain through a forest of heather and bracken.

When we got to the valley bottom, Harry was keen to do a river crossing. The water was very cold and fast. Jack walked further down the river and crossed on dry land. He and Harry then collected some smooth, flat stones for skimming. Then we walked up further to the lake. Mum and Lucy walked on, while we messed around and skimmed stones for about ten minutes. Then we finished our journey to the youth hostel. Dinner never tasted better!

Tom Robinson



Holy Communion for the Sick and Housebound



Recently having spent time in hospital and at home having had a knee replacement operation, it meant that I could not attend Mass on Sundays or weekdays for a few weeks.

On the first weekend while still in hospital Nonnie Hawes, a Eucharistic Minister from Our Lady and English Martyrs, brought me Holy Communion on the Saturday evening after the 6pm Mass, as I was in a Cambridge hospital covered by that parish.

After the hustle and bustle of the hospital routine, it was a wonderful blessing to listen to the Gospel of the Day and receive Holy Communion: a time for quiet reflection on all that had happened to me over the last few days and thanksgiving that the surgery had gone well.

Nonnie is very experienced in taking Holy Communion to people in hospital. As she set up the “altar” to receive the Blessed Sacrament, she did not light a candle as is the usual procedure, since she had once set off the smoke alarm!

During my time at home, Fr Osita brought Holy Communion weekly and each time read from the Gospel of St John - “Anyone who does eat my flesh and drink my blood has eternal life, and I shall raise him up on the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink; he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me and I live in him.”

Surely having the great privilege of receiving Jesus in times of pain is the greatest medicine we can be given?

Pope Francis recently said “Having faith does not mean having no difficulties, but having the strength to face them, knowing we are not alone”.

At the Sacred Heart Parish we have Fr Karol and a group of Eucharistic Ministers who take Communion to the sick and housebound on a regular basis. If any of your Catholic friends or family need this service please contact the Parish Office to arrange this. It will bring great rewards.

Elizabeth Barker

St Ives Parish Church

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

	2011 Actual £	2012 Actual £	2013 Actual £	2014 Budget £	2014 Actual £	DRAFT 2015 Budget £
INCOME						
Collections	61,406	61,884	63,834	65,749	63,438	64,072
Tax Rebates	6,949	7,449	7,215	7,431	9,717	9,814
Donations / Grants	519	2,519	1,268	1,306	1,996	2,016
DEA Interest	223	324	312	321	282	285
Repository / Candles	3,199	3,499	2,691	2,772	2,113	2,134
Mass Stipends	3,549	3,954	3,629	3,738	2,095	2,116
Stole Fees / Catechists	2,623	1,930	2,525	2,601	3,061	3,092
Chaplaincy	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
Fundraising (Hall rent, etc)	4,613	4,252	5,418	5,500	6,565	5,500
Other	694	295	54	100	566	100
Solar Panel rebates	0	1,516	1,586	1,634		0
Sub total	86,775	90,622	91,532	94,152	92,833	92,129
PAYMENTS						
Property (inc maintenance, utilities, insurance)	23,066	22,431	16,922	25,000	19,984	20,000
Priest - salary / expenses	17,325	19,676	20,519	18,500	12,563	14,000
Levies	23,543	23,557	23,854	24,570	24,412	24,656
Administration (inc salaries and cleaners costs)	11,928	11,803	12,121	12,485	11,963	12,083
Other (inc cost of sales - rep / candles)	7,691	7,384	6,105	6,288	7,546	7,621
Sub total	83,553	84,851	79,521	86,842	76,468	78,360
Net Surplus / (Deficit)	3,222	5,771	12,011	7,309	16,365	13,769
NB 2011 comparatives exclude the cost of the solar panel installation and the grants received						
Analysis of Property Expenses						
Church & Hall - maintenance & repairs	12,266	6,857	1,508		4,149	
House - maintenance & repairs	502	7,274	6,947		9,295	
Council Tax	2,186	2,227	2,287		1,727	
Gas, electricity, etc	4,433	4,324	4,680		2,542	
Insurance	1,471	1,422	1,500		1,471	
Other	2,208	327	0		800	
	23,066	22,431	16,922		19,984	
Major maintenance & repair items:						
Car park	5,002					
Boiler work	2,369					
QQR requirements - guttering, rebuilding and repointing chimney stacks		4,715				
Drainage work in back garden		1,755				
Church flooring		3,098				
Lounge ceiling		1,430				
Servicing to boiler & cooker + LED lights		996				
Bedroom furniture, dishwasher, PC		1,267				
Prep work on driveway inc removal of concrete			3,140			
Laying block paving to driveway			3,468			
Office window					1,794	
Bedroom, Bthroom, walkway					5,025	
Church camera					905	

All outstanding parishioner loans have been paid in 2014

views, concerns and suggestions of our parishioners. Each of the three weekend Masses has a representative, and each group has representation on the PSC as well. We will hear their reports later.

A continuing watch is kept on the implementation of the Diocesan Parish Plan and this is updated regularly as you will hear later from David Kerr.

Of course finance is an important part of any parish, and Paul Kent, our new treasurer, will present the Annual Accounts.

As well as keeping an eye on the continuous maintenance schedule for the church, hall and presbytery, Ellen Kemp, the chairman of the F&B Committee, is progressing the need for utilising the courtyard area for our ever-growing congregation, and Ellen will bring us up to date on this project.

As the RE coordinator, my report will cover what has been happening to further the religious education of both the children and adults in our parish and our future plans.

Religious Education Report – April 2015

The Lent talks on The Desert Experience, exploring prayer, which covered the lives of Jesus, Abraham, Moses and Elijah, attracted an audience of approximately thirty people on the four Tuesday evenings.

Eleven candidates are being prepared for the Sacrament of Confirmation that will be conferred by Bishop Alan Hopes on Tuesday 5th May at 7pm. Eight of them are going to the Ignite Festival on May 3rd with their catechists, for a whole day leaving at 8am. Bishop Alan will meet them and will celebrate Mass at 12.30pm

Twenty-one children are now receiving preparation for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Communion. First Communion Masses will be 5pm and 11am on the 6th/7th June and 13th/14th June. Presentation of certificates and barbecue will be on 21st June.

Training for new readers took place on Tuesday 14th April: three readers from the 8am Mass, one from the 11am Mass and one established reader from the 5pm.

There will be an RCIA course starting in the autumn as there are already two enquiries.

I would now like to call upon Paul to present the accounts.

St Teresa of Avila 1515 - 1582



This year we mark the 500th anniversary of the birth of Teresa of Avila, but it was not until 1970 that she was declared the first woman Doctor of the Church by Pope Paul VI.

Teresa entered the Carmelite Convent at the age of twenty, but had to leave a year later when she became very ill. Her severe illness progressed until she became paralysed on her right side. However, Teresa was determined to return to the convent against her father's wishes, and having made a recovery after three years she returned and took her vows.

Over the years Teresa became increasingly aware of how lax the life of the Sisters had become, and after a vision of the Crucifixion she began a reform of the Carmelite rule.

This was extremely unpopular with the Carmelites, as well as some members of the Hierarchy, and as a result she founded the Discalced (shoeless) Carmelites and during her lifetime opened sixteen new convents throughout Spain. She established a strict rule of prayer, vegetarianism and no social contacts, meaning that all of the Sisters lived an enclosed life, except for one or two sisters who were called externs and met with the outside world for necessary reasons.

As well as the reform of the Carmelites, Teresa wrote many books but especially great works on prayer, "*The Way of Perfection*" and "*The Interior Castle*".

However, Teresa was still a very practical lady who endured much suffering, but kept her sense of humour "*From sour faced saints and silly devotions. Lord preserve us.*"

Teresa lived to the age of sixty-seven was canonized forty years after her death.

A family friend, Sister Magdalen, who was a Carmelite, sent me this prayer of Teresa's and I have used it through many difficult times in my life.

*"Let nothing disturb thee; Let nothing dismay thee:
All things pass; God never changes.
Patience attains. All that it strives for.
He who has God finds he lacks nothing:
God alone suffices."*

Elizabeth Barker

SVP Conference Report ***September 2014 - July 2015***

History

Sacred Heart Parish Conference was founded in 1977 and has been active ever since, undertaking a range of work in the Parish.

Members

We currently have seven members, one man and six women. Members attend the fortnightly meetings and undertake visits to those in need.

Number of People helped

- Single Mother with children 1
 - Elderly in own homes 19
 - People in residential/ nursing homes 6
 - People in hospital 3
- 490.5 hours spent visiting

We also provided transport (361 lifts) to Mass, Parish events and hospital appointments.

Highlights of the Year

April	Lunch at a riverside location
June	Afternoon tea in a local garden
July	Coach to Walsingham pilgrimage
July	Boat trip along the Ouse with lunch
October	Mass for the sick
November	Christmas shopping and lunch
December	Christmas party

Income		Expenditure	
Members' donations	£917.00	Those in need	£1581.61
Non-members' donations	£269.56	Mass intentions	£10.00
Church collections	£658.28	Twinnage with Grenada	£160.00
Fundraising	£150.50	SVP Support Payments	£443.07
Total	<u>£1995.34</u>	Total	<u>£2294.68</u>

As you can see, we are running at a deficit of £299.34.

Your local SVP contact is: Mrs Elizabeth Barker, who can be contacted through the Parish Office - 01480 462192.

Sacred Heart Parish St Ives

Open Meeting 10th May 2015

Minutes

(The minutes remain as "Draft Minutes" until formally approved at the next meeting.)

Opening Prayer and Welcome:

Fr Karol opened the meeting at 4 pm with a prayer.

Apologies had been received from Gina Sant, Mike Fox, Rita and Brian O'Neill, John Sayer and Claire Downham.

Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the Open Meeting on 29th June 2014 were approved as a record of that meeting. There were no matters arising not covered by the current agenda. *(The minutes of Open Meetings and Parish Steering Committee Meetings are published on the Parish website following each meeting.)*

Chairman's Report

Elizabeth Barker made her report of the activities of the Parish Steering Committee (PSC). The main change in our parish since the last Open Meeting on the 29th June 2014 is that we have a new parish priest, Fr Karol Porczak, who came to the parish from Poland in January this year after a period of uncertainty. From September 2014, when Fr Edward Tredota was told that he would be moved to the La Salette parish of St Peter's in Dagenham, it was mooted that Mgr Philip Shryane, a diocesan priest, would be appointed to St Ives. However, that did not happen and Fr Karol came here directly from Poland on the same day as Fr Edward left.

Though Fr Karol speaks excellent English, he had not been in England for some years nor has he ever been a Parish Priest before. It has been a steep learning curve for him but he is becoming used to the routines of the Sacred Heart Parish and, through the support of the parish secretary and a few parishioners, he is becoming familiar with the dos and don'ts of running the parish.

The Parish Steering Committee has continued to meet regularly to consider the

question of the desecration of the altar would arise, but Fr Ketterer was able to reassure him on this point. The work being an act of a madman, he said, was not wilful, and fortunately the Blessed Sacrament had not been touched, though the top of the Tabernacle had been knocked off. The large crucifix suspended in front of the altar was uninjured, but Father Ketterer explained, with something approaching a smile, that Ashton was "quite candid about it and told Inspector Storey he hadn't been able to finish, as he should need steps to reach the other one."

Our representative had an interview with Rev Huckle. Mr Huckle said, "I know the young fellow very well. He has been very busy at an invention with reference to motor cars. He has been concentrating his mind on this invention and I feel sure you may regard that as being the cause of his mental derangement. The young fellow was extremely ingenious and he has been a life-long abstainer. He was always remarkably quiet and well-behaved."

Paying a visit to the St Ives Union Workhouse, our representative found the Master (Mr H Everdell) in his room and explained that he had come to obtain some information concerning the conduct of the young man, Ashton. Mr Everdell said "He was no trouble at all until 6 o'clock on Sunday morning when he jumped out of bed, turned the gas out, and knocked one of the men, named Hard, over with a chair. Mr Geeson and two police constables are going to take him to the Three Counties Asylum this afternoon. The workhouse is not the proper place for lunatics. We have no accommodation or attendants. The Order states that 'lunatics can be brought to the Workhouse if there is proper accommodation' but we have not got that here. We have a number of semi-imbeciles, not no one as dangerous as Ashton."

The above is an abridged version of the article that appeared in the local newspaper. It appears from census and other records that Owen recovered, returned to live with his family in the village and lived into old age. Some readers will recognise several local names in the article.

Veronica Boland

Cruising down the river ...

No, it wasn't a Sunday afternoon but a sunny one on Wednesday 30th July, when the parish SVP conference organised a boat trip with a picnic lunch for the members of the Autumn Club, some of whom are usually housebound and all are senior citizens. On the day the eldest was 94.

As we sailed from Hartford Marina along the River Ouse to Brampton and return, we were joined by three members of the clergy: Fr Karol; Wojtek, the La Salette seminarian; and Fr Osita, who had just arrived from Rome the evening before to be our supply priest for five weeks.



As it was his first time in the UK, never mind St Ives, the sailing trip was a lovely introduction to the Huntingdonshire countryside, as well as to the peace of the river. Fr Osita introduced himself to every one of us, and the members of the crew, and thanked us for a wonderful experience.



The Ladybird is a specially adapted boat for the disabled and elderly, and is now run by an independent charity, as well as a volunteer crew.

If you are an elderly parishioner who would enjoy meeting others, please contact the SVP president through the Parish Office to get further details of the Autumn Club.

Book Review - Doing Good Better

by William Macaskill

Macaskill is, according to the sub-title, Co-founder of the Effective Altruism Movement. I picked up his book from a discounted shelf in Heffers (ever the careful buyer, me!) I haven't finished it yet, but even the first few chapters contain some powerful messages about how we could do a lot more good with the amounts we already donate to charity, be they large or small. I often recall the message about charity in the bible – “don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing” (or is it vice versa?) but this book shows that to give without engaging your brain can end up providing a lot less benefit for your money than could be achieved with a bit of thought and planning.

I can't match the impact of the book in a few paragraphs, but let me illustrate a few ideas emerging from the early chapters. Firstly, even those of us on average incomes in the affluent west are immensely wealthy in comparison to most of the rest of the world. On an income of £18,200 pa you are in the top 5% of the world's earners. OK, the cost of living here is much higher than in poorer countries but, in a way, that reinforces the point that giving up, say, 1% of that income would double the income of someone on the £1 per day poverty line for approximately half a year, giving a tremendous boost to the length and quality of their life, or that of their children.

As in business, getting the maximum benefit out of your expenditure requires hardnosed analysis. Donating a lump sum to charities, without questioning how they spend it, is like giving a supermarket a cheque and telling them to fill your trolley with whatever they choose. The sort of analysis in the book follows the NICE (National Institute for Health Care and Excellence) model, where benefits are assessed in terms of the number of QALYs (Quality Adjusted Life Years) provided by a treatment. Unsurprisingly, NICE decisions are often derided for apparently brutally cutting off effective treatments, but what their approach is attempting to do is find how to maximise the benefits from limited resources. In UK NHS terms, the trade-off between different treatments may be marginal, but when one applies the same technique to compare, eg, UK health care with basic facilities in sub-Saharan Africa, the results can be startling. I recall recent adverse news coverage of UK cancer patients having life sustaining drug treatments withdrawn because they cost £20,000 pa. If that were made up by charitable donations of £20K, to gain one year of life – not necessarily at full “quality” – each £50 of it is estimated to be able to save one QALY in the third

was going on in the church. Fr Ketterer, arming himself with a stick, hurried into the church, but the man was gone.

On Ballard's arrival at the police station he told Inspector Storey what he knew of the matter, and the latter, recognising the need for prompt measures, immediately cycled to the spot, Constables Cook and R Hodson following on foot. When Inspector Storey got to the chapel Ashton was just coming away, still flourishing his hammer in a style that was not reassuring. He said he was now on his way to the Parish Church. Inspector Storey, seeing it would be better to deal with him by strategy, offered to go with him. Luckily on reaching the end of Needingworth Road, they met the two constables and by means of a ruse Ashton was disarmed. It was suggested to him that it was hardly fair that he should have to carry the hammer and the bar and “do all the work” as well, and that it would be better to let the constables carry them for him. To this Ashton readily agreed. He was then persuaded to walk on with

Cook and Hodson while Inspector Storey went back to the church to ascertain what had happened. On reaching the main street by the cattle market, Cook persuaded Ashton to come on to the police station on the plea that “there was another little place there which they ought to smash up before going to the Parish Church”, and in this way he was conducted into safety. The Relieving Officer, Mr Geeson, was communicated with and an order was made for the admission of Ashton to the workhouse, where he was detained until Tuesday when the necessary magistrates' order having been obtained, he was removed to the Three Counties Asylum.

Seen by our representative, Fr Ketterer spoke with evident deep feeling of the disaster which has fallen on him and his flock. “It almost seems” said Fr Ketterer “as if colour had attracted the man. Every window with stained glass is broken but the only plain one broken is one that happened to be covered by a green curtain.”

Mr Carter asked whether the

police station where he informed Inspector Storey of what he had seen.

Ashton, meanwhile, had gained admittance to the chapel by bursting open the door. The tremendous force that had been used is shown by the way in which the heavy ironwork of the hinges and lock were smashed and that a large piece of stone was forced away from the side of the lock. Immediately inside the door he had smashed the stonework of the font and badly damaged the leaden interior. A series of fourteen pictures of the Stations of the Cross also seemed to have attracted his attention for he had smashed all of them except one. Two alms boxes had received a blow each from the hammer and then the small organ came in for his destroying energies. Two oil paintings which are especially valued by the Catholics, have been terribly damaged. On the same side, one or two valuable, small stained glass windows had been shattered and a statue of St Anne had been knocked from its pedestal and broken to atoms. In the corner is the altar of Our Lady on which

stood a figure of the Virgin, with some fine candlesticks and other ornaments. The whole of these had been swept into a confused mass of wreckage at the foot of the altar. The wooden railings dividing the altar steps from the body of the church had been pulled down and scattered in all directions, all the valuable ornaments and crucifix pulled down and broken, and the top of the Tabernacle smashed completely off. One of the most remarkable pieces of destruction was evidenced by the door of the sacristy, which was kept locked. This is a heavy wooden door with massive iron fittings but dozens of terrific blows seem to have been rained upon it, until at last the bolt refusing to give way, the stonework on the side had been torn away and the door swung open.

While this work of destruction was proceeding, Miss Osborne came to the church to arrange some decoration, and looking in was horrified to see what was taking place. Hurrying round to the house of Fr Ketterer adjoining, she informed the priest of the frightful destruction which

world, for example by buying mosquito nets for children. So a £20K donation could save 400 QALYs if used differently - 400 years of good life!

The book goes on to raise other controversial questions based on the same sort of analysis, such as "Why You Shouldn't Donate to Disaster Relief", but the above example highlights the central point. It then gets into what, to me, are more esoteric arguments about applying the same principles to how best to use your vote, or engage in politics, to benefit others.

So, what am I learning from this book? Essentially that I should be able to provide a lot more benefit to others by applying a bit of hard love and cold analysis to my donations to charity, even without increasing them. Which must be worth doing. Perhaps you too?

David Kerr



Parish Christmas Lunch

Thursday, 17th December

at 12 for 12.30 pm

Glass of sherry

Roast turkey, pigs in blankets

Stuffing, roast potatoes

Vegetables, cranberry sauce

Christmas pudding or trifle

Glass of wine

***Proceeds to De Paul Trust, who look after the
young homeless in our cities***

Two Short Poems

by Jackie Tevlin

When Jessica Died

*Before her death she said
"Take anything you fancy"
From my wardrobe.
This was no mean offer
As Aunt Jessica wore
Designer labels only.
The fur might be nice
In the ice
To keep you warm
In Cambridge – she sighed
Laying back upon a delicate
embroidered
Lace pillowslip.
Put it on
Let me see how you look
"Very grand"
For tea at "The Ritz"
Please take it
And wear it
And when you do
Think of me
And smile.*

*And so I did.
And I never thought
It was a dead woman's coat
Only that she was still
Embracing me.*

First Kiss

*It was as if a thin silver satin
Ribbon had found me
Fluttering in the breeze.
It brushed against my cheek
As if to say "Hello! I'm here!"
And rippled through my heart
To ensure I was alive
Then wound its way
Around his little finger
As if to say
"You're mine"!*

THE PUZZLE OF THE PILLAR

Have you ever wondered why the free-standing pillar nearest the entrance to the church has a different decorative trim around the top compared to the other pillars in the church?

The answer is not known, but an explanation for the anomaly may be found in the article below, which provides a fascinating insight into social history, and particularly the behaviour of a young man from Hemingford Abbots who vandalised the church 109 years ago.

CATHOLIC CHURCH WRECKED AT ST IVES

Hunts County News

**SATURDAY, 8TH DECEMBER
1906**

A most remarkable affair, and at the same time an almost irretrievable disaster to the Catholics of the district, took place at St Ives on Saturday, when the interior of the Catholic Church was wrecked by a young man named Owen Ashton, evidently acting under the influence of acute mania. Ashton, who is about 22 years of age, lived at

Hemingford Abbots. He was generally of a quiet disposition and exceedingly temperate in his habits, but of late had been working hard at the production of a patent to be applied to motor cars, and it is thought that the amount of study concentrated on this may have affected his mind. At about half past nine he called upon Rev Huckle, the minister of the Free Church at Hemingford Grey, and told him he was going to St Ives. Mr Huckle suspected that something was wrong and tried to induce Ashton to remain with him. Finding it impossible to detain Ashton, Mr Huckle hurried to the residence of Pc Cook. Quickly donning his uniform, Cook mounted his bicycle and followed in Ashton's wake.

In the meantime Wm Ballard was passing down Needingworth Road when he saw Ashton battering away at the main door of the Roman Catholic chapel with a sledge hammer and a bar of iron. Ballard asked what he was doing whereupon Ashton turned round and attempted to brain him with the iron bar. On this, Ballard, perhaps wisely, made with all possible speed for the