



Clergy Carousel: Goodbye Peters, hello Paul!

Each summer, Bishop Brian decides on Clergy appointments throughout the Diocese. This year's appointments include some significant moves in our own Deanery ...

Fr Peter Sharrocks is taking over as parish priest at St Peter's, Hazel Grove, at the end of August, after nearly 14 years as parish priest at St Werburgh's. As he was a one-time curate at St Werburgh's and later parish priest at St Theresa's. Fr Peter has been in Chester for nearly a quarter of a century



(with a break for secondment in Tanzania) but he will now be returning to his home town of Stockport. We thank him for the service he has given in Chester, including his many years of current and past service as Chair of Governors at St Werburgh's and St Columba's Primary School and Chester Catholic High School. We send with him all our best wishes and prayers for a successful and fulfilling time at Hazel Grove. At least he will be much closer to his family and to his beloved Stockport County FC – we understand he may even renew his season ticket – and he has the chance to help re-organise and update the club as he has St Werburgh's.



Fr Paul Shaw, currently at St Luke the Physician, Bebington, a parish only recently transferred to the Chester and Ellesmere Port Deanery, is welcomed to St Werburgh's as the new parish priest. The Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrimages directed by Fr Sharrocks may be leaving the parish, but we hope that Fr Paul's popular annual parish pilgrimages to British and continental destinations will become a feature at St Werburgh's.

Fr Peter Hooper, who became resident at St Wer-

burgh's whilst carrying out chaplaincy duties at the Countess of Chester and Bowmere (formerly West Cheshire) Hospitals in 2003-2005, is to replace Fr Paul at Bebington. Fr Hooper has long desired to take on parish duties as well as to continue some form of chaplaincy work, and we rejoice with him that he can do this at Bebington, where he will be also carrying out chaplaincy duties at Clatterbridge Hospital. We'll miss his smiling face and bubbly sermons.



*David Kluth,
St Werburgh's Parish*

University: Chester priests & parishes "must do more"

A student who has worked hard to establish a Catholic Society at the University of Chester has called on the city's Catholic community to do more to support the initiative.

Dave Wheat has now finished his course, but managed to organise two well attended Masses at the chaplaincy centre during his last term, with the support of the university's Anglican chaplain, Revd Ian Arch.

Fr Peter Sharrocks of St Werburgh's, and diocesan youth director, Fr Jonathan

Leach, celebrated Mass on campus in the closing months of the academic year, but Dave Wheat says there needs to be a Catholic chaplain attached to the university, working alongside Revd Arch and his team. A formal Catholic chaplain would offer "a lasting presence in the university community", he believes.

He has also called on the wider Catholic community of Chester to do more, saying: "Local parishes need to do their bit. I was welcomed by the community of St Clare's in my second year in Chester and

enjoyed my time in the parish. When new students arrive in Chester they need to be welcomed into a parish and made to feel part of the Catholic community."

With the support of a dedicated chaplain and the local Catholic community, he says a Catholic Society could flourish at the University of Chester from next academic year, becoming a source of "great vitality, service and community".

Revd Ian Arch agrees. His assessment is that the university's Catholic Society has not

quite taken off yet. He says: "We need to find a keen core group to get it off the ground, possibly with some support from a few volunteers from churches in the area."

Postscript: Jonathan Leach has very recently resigned from the priesthood, seeking to pursue his vocation in other ways. A new Diocesan Youth Director has been appointed: Fr Peter Linford, who is based at Our Lady and the Apostles parish in Stockport. Details of the youth activities are on the "DOSY" website, dioceseofshrewsbury.org/dosy

Fair trading at Marks & Spencer

Members of the Chester CAFOD Support Group were so pleased with the recent announcement by Marks and Spencer that they were going to sell only Fairly-traded tea and coffee in the store that they wrote a congratulatory letter to the manager of the Chester branch, John Barton. His response was to invite the group for a “guided tour” to see the other fairly-traded goods now on sale. So, on May 17th members of the group visited the store and were treated to a free sampling of the tea, coffee—

and the extremely delicious chocolate!

Our picture shows members of the Support Group, together with Marjorie Ewart from Marks and Spencer. The wall display in M&S’s “Café Revive” shows the list of countries where local communities now stand to benefit from the fairtrade policies and trading arrangements: Ethiopia, Honduras, Indonesia, Kenya, Peru and Tanzania.



A reviving coffee: Kate Hughes, Debbie Dwyer, Miriam Armstead, Judy Kearney and Rita Assanand from the Chester Cafod Support Group meet Marjorie Ewart from Marks & Spencer

This visit illustrates very well how important it can be for campaigners to give praise where praise is due: even though we may think companies could be doing more, a letter of thanks for progress already made will be well received and will undoubtedly help the cause.

*Ann McCarthy,
St Theresa’s Parish*

“Make Fairtrade Your Habit”

National Fair Trade Fortnight in March was celebrated across Chester with an Information Stall in the City Centre, the promotion of Fair Trade goods in shops and cafes and events at the Zoo, the Cathedral and churches across the city.

Many churches in Chester are involved in the campaign for trade justice and already have the habit of fair trade.

Could your parish or group get involved? For example by:

- Serving fair-trade tea and coffee at meetings and groups.
- Having a regular fair-trade stall to promote and sell fair-trade goods and spread the message of fair trade.
- Having literature available about the issues of fair trade.
- Getting involved in Fairtrade Fortnight in 2007.

*More information from
Helen Connor, 01244 317381
And see www.fairtrade.org.uk*

Ecumenism at Chester Cathedral

Chester Cathedral represents a potent Christian presence in the city. It is a encouraging to know of some of the ways in which the Cathedral community sustains active links with the local and wider Catholic community:

- ◇ Bishop Brian is formally appointed as Ecumenical Canon at the cathedral - and has offered two Masses in the cathedral during his time as bishop.
- ◇ Mgr Chris Lightbound, Fr Denis Marmion and Fr Sharrocks all serve as Ecumenical chaplains, on the rota for leading some of the daily prayer offerings.
- ◇ The Benedictine tradition is maintained in various ways, including the nominal appointment of one of the Ampleforth priors as Prior of Chester.

Training needs and resources

The CaFE course “Exploring the Catholic Church” put on at St Theresa’s in May and June proved very successful and very well attended—more than 50 each week over the 6 weeks. People found the video talks and the discussions very inspirational, with the set up in the Parish Centre and the refreshments all adding to the occasion. Many thanks to all those who helped or supported the course. Further CaFE modules are being planned for the autumn—watch out for further details or contact Fr Kenny on 01244 371660.

The CaFE programmes at St Werburgh’s continue until the end of July: Wednesdays at 9.15am at the School and Thursdays at 8.00pm at the Parish Centre. Decisions on the programme after the summer will be taken in discussion with the incoming parish

priest, Fr Paul Shaw.

Also for the autumn, the Chester Pastoral Council’s Training Group is organising two “Days of Training/Recollection” to be held at St Columba’s Hall:

- ◇ **Saturday 7th October, Day for Readers, led by Canon Chris Walsh.**
- ◇ **Saturday 11th November, Day for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, led by Fr Geoff O’Grady.**

The Training Group is now keen to obtain a fuller picture of each parish’s lay training needs, so that the Group, and the Council, can assess where they can really help with coordinated programmes across the parishes.

*Further details from Paula Wszolek,
01244 314191*

Catholic Women's League: 100 years & counting...

Centenary Year 2006 is proving to be a great year for the Catholic Women's League, with special celebrations to mark the event.

In 1906 Margaret Fletcher, a convert and great worker for the Church started the magazine "The Crucible" aimed at

ing years they established League Huts which helped soldiers in both world wars, began work for refugees, established Our Lady's Catechists giving instruction to children where there were no catholic schools, ran Summer School courses at Oxford's Plater College and supported numerous other charities

founded in 1956 by a Mrs Baty who gathered a few friends in her drawing room in Abbey Square and set up the Section. Women from all the Chester parishes joined her and they embarked on a programme of monthly meetings and charitable activities including hospital visiting work in parishes and fund-raising. Over the years many thousands of pounds have been raised for local and national charities.

The Chester Section continues to meet every month in St. Francis's Parish Hall and although

lunches, coffee evenings and an annual day retreat with the Poor Clare Sisters in Hawarden. They recently joined some one hundred women from all over the Diocese for a grand centenary celebration at St. Columba's.

To have survived for one hundred years is remarkable and though we cannot know what the future may hold it is our hope that more women will join us so that we can continue and expand the work and companionship which marks the League. C.W.L, stands for Charity, Work, and Loyalty, all worthwhile aims interpreted more informally as Caring With Love.

*Further information from
Marian Curtis
01244 341307*



getting help or better education for women. This led to the formation of the Catholic Women's League and women flocked to join. In the follow-

ing CAFOD which they helped to found. Much of this work and a great deal else continues to-day.

The Chester Section was

the age profile is rather high still works hard to support all manner of good causes. Members also enjoy a number of social activities including

"Orpheus" at St Theresa's

When it comes to a *capella* singing "Orpheus", a male ensemble choir from Lviv in the Ukraine, can be considered world-class. How do I know? Because I've seen them at the International Church Music Festival at Chester Cathedral and then at our own Church, St Theresa's in Blacon.

This all started last summer when Fr Jim Kenny our Parish Priest received a letter from the Festival organising committee asking for help. They were expecting up to 400 singers from around the world. Could we help by hosting a choir on a Sunday morning to sing at Mass? At first we were allocated a Swiss choir from the diocese of Berne but when their attendance was cancelled we were

asked to take the "Orpheus" ensemble. We still did not know the treat in store.

As the weeks went by I learned more and more about the choir from their Dutch agent. The eight men from the Lviv Conservatory sing classical Russian and Ukrainian songs, hymns, spirituals, opera and popular evergreens, and I then knew from their CDs that they were indeed a talented group.

We arranged for the choir to sing at our Mass on the 18 June and then give us a thirty minutes concert and sell their CDs. They needed all the financial help we could give them. They travelled for two days and nights in their minibus (they've never flown) and can earn as little as £130 a month. Westerners would



not leave their houses for this amount!

18 June arrived and after seeing and hearing them at the Cathedral I knew how great they were. In fact our parishioners gave them a standing ovation after a half hour of sheer enjoyment. Their programme included 'Adoramus te', 'O Sole mio', 'Waltzing

Matilda' with suitable sound effects, 'The Lion Sleeps Tonight' with more safari sounds, and an encore of 'Down by the Riverside'.

We can't wait for the next International Church Music Festival to come to Chester!

*Chris Steel,
St Theresa's Parish*

Chester Pastoral Council

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Deadline for Autumn issue: 30 September

It is 12 months since publication of the first issue of "The Chester Catholic". It has proved to be a period of great change, with clergy moves or imminent departures or closure affecting four of our parishes. In April this year the Pastoral Council was due to welcome Bishop Brian to one of our regular meetings to discuss some of these issues. Unfortunately the Bishop's illness made this impossible, and it also meant that his Visitations to the Deanery parishes had to be curtailed. It is good to see that Bishop Brian is recovering and has started to resume his duties. We hope it will prove possible for the Bishop to join us for one of our future meetings.

Sunday Masses across the district:

St. Anthony's, Saltney (Wrexham Diocese)		Sun 11.00am
St. Clare's, Lache, Chester	Sat 6.00pm	Sun 9.30am
St. Columba's, Plas Newton, Chester	Sat 7.15pm	Sun 9.15 & 11.00am
St. Cuthbert's, Mouldsworth		Sun 9.00am
St Francis, Chester	Sat 6.30pm	Sun 8.00, 9.30 & 11.00am
St Joseph, Malpas (Saturday Vigil Mass is at Farndon URC)	Sat 4.30pm	Sun 9.00am
St Plegmund, Tattenhall		Sun 11.00am
St. Theresa's, Blacon, Chester	Sat 6.30pm	Sun 10.00am 5.30pm
St Thomas Becket, Tarporley	Sat 5.30pm	Sun 11.00am
St Werburgh, Chester (Sat Vigil Mass at Rowton Methodist Church)	Sat 6.00pm	Sun 9.00, 10.45am, 6.00pm

We have a Website!

We now have a website for the cluster of parishes listed here. As well as the basic information for each parish, the site provides the link to individual parish websites where these exist. It also holds the current & previous issues of the "Chester Catholic" newsletter.

Our thanks are due to Jordi Morell for hosting the site and to George Cooke for the design.

We hope you will find it useful.

www.chestercatholic.org.uk

Music at St Werburgh's

A major legacy of Fr Sharrock's time at St Werburgh's has been the church re-ordering and the installation of the Binns-Sixsmith organ. The church has become a notable venue for musical events, including those arranged in association with the Chester Summer Music Festival.

The 2006 Festival features three varied concerts at St Werburgh's:

11 July: Red Priest, "the UK's most dynamic, theatrical and outrageously different Baroque ensemble" performing Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*.

13 July: Choir of St John's College, Cambridge.

14 July: Organ recital by David Hill, Director of Music at St John's College.

**Full details of Festival events
from 01244 340392**

Malpas discussions continue

The Sacred Heart Fathers have confirmed that they are to close their retreat and conference centre at Malpas at the end of 2006, but the Order's Provincial, Fr Michael Walshe, says discussions with Bishop Brian Noble about the future of St Joseph's parish, Malpas, and the Mass centres at Farndon and Tattenhall are still ongoing.

Fr Walshe says: "We're working with the bishop on this. We're discussing what will happen. It will be the autumn before this is decided."

The house at Malpas first opened in 1946, as a student house where members did their philosophy and theology studies, and it was adapted as a retreat and conference centre in the early seventies. The Order has come to its decision on closure because of the decline in numbers using the centre, the prohibitive costs of modernisation—but above all because of their reduced manpower.

The Malpas site will be sold, with the Order hoping to relocate to a new city venue early in 2007.



Don't miss . . . BBC Songs of Praise, from Chester Cathedral, 10th September

This was recorded during the International Church Music Festival, and includes a number of overseas choirs, including "Orpheus" - see p 3