

Spring 2009



The Chester Catholic

2009—Crucial year for climate justice

On Monday 16th March a coachload of parishioners from Chester & District travelled to Shrewsbury Cathedral for the regional launch of CAFOD's campaign "Climate Justice". Bishop Brian was there to give the campaign his blessing, and to reinforce the message of our duty to care for God's creation.

We all know that climate change will have severe consequences, but CAFOD and other development agencies point to the likelihood that poorer parts of the world will suffer disproportionate effects - in some regions necessitating large scale migrations.

The twin aims (Our Hands/Your Hands) of the CAFOD cam-



paigned are to urge individuals to take personal actions to reduce their "carbon footprints", and to press

governments to agree on the urgent international actions—both to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and to help fund the vital projects that will assist communities adapt to unavoidable effects of climatic changes.

Why is 2009 a crucial year? Because in December, government leaders meet in Copenhagen to agree new climate change treaties to replace the Kyoto treaty which expires in 2012.

More information on the Climate Justice campaign can be found on www.cafod.org.uk or from Sue Bownas (CAFOD manager for Shrewsbury Diocese) on 01244 677594.

Golden Jubilee celebrations at St Theresa's

Late 1958 saw a box steel framework take shape on Blacon Avenue. It caused great excitement in the community, especially the many Catholics of Blacon and Saughall who had been attending Mass, with the help of priests from St Francis', in the Army Camp and later in a village hall.

In 1956 Bishop John Murphy had appointed Fr John Corcoran to start a new parish dedicated to St Theresa of Lisieux.

By 1959, the frame was transformed into a church, the realisation of our parish dream, having lobbied, prayed and, of course, raised funds. December 15 1959 saw St Theresa's Church blessed and the first Mass offered in the presence Bishop Murphy and 92 priests.

Fifty years on and we are now equally excited about our plans for celebrating our Golden Jubilee. A Mass will

mark this on the evening of Tuesday 15 December in the presence of Bishop Brian. We can't guarantee 92 priests, but we can be sure that it will



Bishop John Murphy processes into St Theresa's to celebrate the first Mass on 15th December 1959

be a glorious culmination of our celebrations throughout the year that are getting underway at the moment.

A Jubilee Committee has been formed and the parishioners have

been consulted about plans for celebrations throughout the year. It is an opportunity, not only to look backwards with fondness, but also to look to the future and revitalise ourselves in our worship, Catholic witness, and ecumenism in Blacon and Saughall.

The Jubilee Committee would be delighted to hear from former parishioners who may have moved away from Blacon. Have you any anecdotes, photos, etc that we can use to enrich our celebrations with? Please get in touch.

Finally, please keep our parish in your prayers as we journey towards another 50 years!

Geoff Taylor – St Theresa's Jubilee Committee, 01244 379342, email: geoffat56@mac.com

Life a little more convenient at St Clare's

Since September 2006 negotiations have been held with the Diocesan Surveyors and Finance and Works Committee about various building projects around the Church buildings at St Clare's. Autumn 2008 saw the start of works with the resurfacing of the driveway which was badly potholed. The estate has also been brought more up-to-date and compliant with "Access for All" legislation with the provision of purpose-built access ramps outside the church and



Rosemary Prendergast makes an easy exit

also the parish room. Inside the Church the repository has been sited into a large alcove. The existing cupboards and gates have been adapted and refitted. Disabled toilet facilities have been built at the back of the church where the repository used to be. Previously the only facility was towards the front of the church, through the Sacristy. Many thanks to all involved in planning and providing these improvements to the fabric of the Church.

Jenny Szczygłowska

Happenings in Hong Kong

Two years ago, we featured "News from Afar" from a St Columba parishioner currently living in Hong Kong, with mention of "standing-room-only" Masses. Here we have some reflections from another St Columba parishioner, who is a regular visitor to HK.

The main religion in Hong Kong is Buddhism but there is a lively Catholic presence made up mainly of Chinese and Filipinos. There is no repression of belief or spiritual practice in the territory and no tension between faiths.

Catholic worship in Hong Kong is usually lively and I concur with your previous correspondent that you will need to turn up early to get a seat, especially at festival times. Music is a strong element in both English and Cantonese masses. The main ethnic group in English services is Filipino, as most middle class Chinese families employ a Filipino maid. Filipinos are enthusi-

astic musicians with their singing being especially joyous. The music in Chinese services is also of a high standard and often well organised. I have found Chinese Catholics to be very welcoming, always taking the trouble to provide me with an English mass book.

The Chinese are a very social people and there is a great range of support activities for Catholics with various prayer groups, counselling for individuals and couples, retreats and courses. Several priests and religious have been influenced by the Buddhist faith in terms of thought and meditation. These reflective qualities have found a Christian expression in their understanding of and devotion to Our Lord.

Tim Moore

Organ Recitals at St. Werburgh's Chester

"TUESDAYS-at-ONE"

Lunchtime recitals given by members of the Chester & North-East Wales Organists' & Choirmasters' Association and Friends. Every Tuesday from 5th May through to 15th September. Retiring collection.

"CELEBRITY RECITALS"

7.30pm Admission £5.00

Friday 24th April David Poulter
(Liverpool Cathedral)

Thurs 2nd July Alessandro Bianchi (Italy)

Chester ACROSS Group

The ACROSS group will be travelling to Lourdes on 17th September 2009 for 9 days including 7 nights in a top hotel which caters for sick/disabled pilgrims.

The Group could not function without volunteer "helpers" who allow our sick and disabled VIPs to enjoy a truly memorable religious pilgrimage, but at the same time to do so in a holiday atmosphere which provides the best of both worlds for everyone.

The group is still looking to recruit sick and disabled as well as male and female volunteer helpers, including nurses.

For further information please contact
Group Leader Tony Murphy, on
0788-1656-974 or email
tonymurphyefc2002@yahoo.co.uk

Chester & Wirral Newman Circle

The Newman Association is a national organisation whose members meet regularly in local "circles" to discuss and develop their understanding of the Christian faith. Most members are RC, but baptised Christians of other traditions are warmly welcome as Associate Members.

A new Circle now serves the Chester & Wirral area. Monthly meetings have been arranged up until the end of 2009, and are usually held from 7.30pm to 9pm on a Saturday evening at 4 Hamilton Street, Chester, CH2 3 JG

For more information contact Joseph O'Neill on 01244 322440 or email jmonell@btinternet.com
www.newman.org.uk

£4m Emmaus Building opens

February 12th was an important day in the life of Catholic High School Chester:- the official unveiling of its new innovative and inspiring Emmaus Building. The project provides new teaching and learning spaces designed specifically for music and drama departments and houses the entire Sixth Form, together with a new visitor reception and two new laboratories in the main school.

The invited audience were completely engaged by the students giving their own take on "Fame" in the Emmaus auditorium, fondly known as "The Lyceum". An entertaining 'battle' of singers v dancers ensued ably supported by the school's own City Jazz band which culminated in the entire ensemble performing wonderfully together. The students didn't miss a beat and with these new facilities they will be equipped to develop their skills to a very high level.

Sadly, Bishop Brian was ill and wasn't able to attend, but we were delighted that Fr Russell Cooke, one of our Governors and Regional Dean for

North Cheshire, was present to bless the cross and unveil the commemorative plaque.

Although the building work is complete the fund-raising for the governors' 10% contribution continues. The school has in place a 5 year plan to raise £400,000 and events continue to be held to reach this target. Our next event is planned for 10 July. The City Jazz Band and singers supported by 'Old Skool' will make for a fantastic night of entertain-

ment. A bar service will be provided together with an opportunity to bid in our silent auction for 7 pieces of sporting and music memorabilia. Tickets are on sale now at £5 and available from the school office.

Before that, on 26th April, Chair of Governors Peter Bulmer runs the London Marathon to raise funds for the school and for the "OAKS" charity in Sierra Leone. Watch out for his number 18181, and contact the school if you'd like add to Peter's sponsorship list.

*Steve Gauller,
Strategic Business Manager*



"Fame" at "Chester's Lyceum"

Diary dates 2009

- ♦ **Saturday 25 April** "St Paul, The Man & His Mission" Retreat Day at St Columba's. Details 01625 426868
- ♦ **Wednesday 29 April**, LPA Team meeting, 8pm at St Francis'
- ♦ **Saturday 23 May**, LPA Team Development Day at St Columba's
- ♦ **Saturday 13 June**, Diocesan Catechists Annual Gathering with Bishop Brian, St Nicholas Catholic High School. Details 01477 532533
- ♦ **Saturday 27 June**, Year of St Paul concluding Mass at Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral, 12 noon. All ticket event, with limited allocations to each parish. LPA to coordinate coach transport
- ♦ **Wednesday 8 July**, LPA Team meeting 8pm at St Thomas Tarporley
- ♦ **Friday 10 July**, "City Jazz" fund-raiser at Catholic High School. 01244 981600
- ♦ **Saturday 11 July**, Barbecue at St Theresa's Blacon: Golden Jubilee event
- ♦ **Sunday 26 July—Monday 3 August**. Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes (travellers by air depart a day later and return a day sooner. Details 0161 483 3476
- ♦ **Wednesday 7 October**, LPA Team meeting 8pm at St Theresa's
- ♦ **Saturday 31 October**, Day of Recollection for existing Readers, with Fr Geoff O'Grady. St Columba's. 01244 345676
- ♦ **Friday 4 Dec**, Confirmation Mass for candidates from St Werburgh's, St Francis', St Clare's, St Cuthbert's & St Thomas' parishes. Venue to be announced. Names to PPs any time after Easter
- ♦ **Tuesday 15 Dec**, Golden Jubilee Mass at St Theresa's Blacon, with Bishop Brian. 7.30pm



The regional launch of CAFOD's Climate Justice campaign, Shrewsbury Cathedral. With Bishop Brian and Canon Coonan are CAFOD partners from Cambodia, and UK CAFOD personnel- Chris Bain (Director) Sue Bonnas (Diocesan Manager) and Sarah Barnett (Campaigns Team)



St Theresa's Youth Group celebrated Fairtrade Fortnight by making cakes using as many Fairtrade ingredients as possible and then selling them after Mass on 22nd Feb. £52.00 was raised for CAFOD. Photo shows the group with Fr. Jim Kenny and Jane Walsh, having a well-deserved sit down after baking for 2 hours!

Chester & District LPA Team

Co-Leader of LPA Team, & Regional Dean for North Cheshire:

Fr Russell Cooke, St Columba's,
1 Newhall Rd, Plas Newton,
Chester CH2 1SA, 01244 400873

Lay Co-Leader of LPA Team:

Kate Hughes, 01244 683538

Newsletter Contact: Bernard Payne, 01244 350323 email: bernard.payne@tiscali.co.uk

Training Group Convenor: Syd Jones,
01244 345676

The Local Pastoral Area Team for Chester & District (LPA 11) includes a priest and one elected lay person from each of the six parishes, together with a Deacon (nominated by the Deacons from the LPA) and one Teacher and one Catechist (nominated by the Bishop). The current LPA Team, serving for three years from October 2007 is :

- ◆ **St Clare:** Fr Simon Treloar, Kate Hughes
- ◆ **St Columba:** Fr Russell Cooke, Bernard Payne
- ◆ **St Cuthbert/ St Thomas Becket:** Fr Joe Carney, Bill Cresswell/
Tom Bonikowski
- ◆ **St Francis:** Fr Andrzej Tomkiel, Vincent Hatton/ Anne Brocklehurst
- ◆ **St Theresa:** Fr Jim Kenny, Gerald Jones
- ◆ **St Werburgh:** Fr Paul Shaw, Brian Burns
- ◆ **Deacon:** Rev Lawrence Hordley
- ◆ **Catechist:** Tia Lasok-Smith
- ◆ **Teacher:** John Murray

Parishes in Chester & District Local Pastoral Area

www.chestercatholic.org.uk

<i>Times of Sunday Masses</i>			<i>Parish Priest</i>	<i>Lay rep on LPA Team</i>
St. Anthony's, Saltney (Wrexham Diocese)		Sun 11.00am	Fr Simon Treloar	N/A
St. Clare's, Lache, Chester	Sat 6.00pm	Sun 9.30am	Served from St Anthony's	Kate Hughes
St. Columba's, Plas Newton, Chester	Sat 7.15pm	Sun 9.15 & 11.00am	Fr Russell Cooke	Bernard Payne
St. Cuthbert's, Mouldsworth		Sun 9.00am	Fr Joe Carney	Bill Cresswell/ Tom Bonikowski
St Francis, Chester	Sat 6.30pm	Sun 8.00, 9.30 & 11.00am	Fr Andrzej Tomkiel	Vincent Hatton/ Anne Brocklehurst
St. Theresa's, Blacon, Chester	Sat 6.30pm	Sun 10.00am	Fr Jim Kenny	Gerald Jones
St Thomas Becket, Tarpoley	Sat 5.30pm	Sun 11.00am	Fr Joe Carney	Bill Cresswell/ Tom Bonikowski
St Werburgh, Chester	Sat 6.00pm (at Rowton Methodist Chapel)	Sun 9.00, 10.45am, 6.00pm	Fr Paul Shaw	Brian Burns

Well trained for lay ministries?

The Local Pastoral Team recognises the value of lay ministry and the support provided across all six parishes by the army of volunteers undertaking a wide range of essential duties and functions. These responsibilities require a combination of knowledge, skills and personal qualities and the Team is keen to ensure that volunteers are well supported.

A range of support and training is already provided across the parishes but, in the spirit of LPA working, there is great benefit from sharing.

The LPA Team's Training Group has representatives from all six par-

ishes, and they are looking at existing good practice to identify areas for joint development, and provide access to information, advice, support and further training opportunities.

Day of Recollection for existing Readers, with Fr Geoff O'Grady, at St Columba's on Saturday 31 October 2009. Watch out for further details.

The work is wide, including lay ministries such as Eucharistic Ministers, Readers, Children's Catechists together with support and guidance to adults considering joining

the faith.

It also embraces more practical skills such as leadership, business management and communications. The goal is to ensure ready availability of capable and enthusiastic volunteers with the skills to do the job well.

At the moment the key work is an exercise to identify what arrangements are already in place in each of the six parishes and what opportunities there are to work together, building on good practice. This work will take until September to complete. Progress will be reported in this Newsletter in summer.

Syd Jones, Training Group Convenor