

Spring 2010



## *Bishop Mark ordained Coadjutor Bishop of Shrewsbury*

*The Diocesan newspaper "The Voice" has given full coverage of the appointment of our new Coadjutor Bishop—Assistant Bishop who will take over upon Bishop Brian's retirement. In these columns Kate Hughes, Lay Co-Leader of our LPA Team, describes her involvement in the music for the great occasion of Bishop Mark's ordination, and Stephen Tierney, parishioner at St Columba's, writes of a conversation with Bishop Mark about his initial priorities.*

**POUR OUT UPON THIS  
CHOSEN ONE THE POWER  
THAT IS FROM YOU'**

These words from the prayer of consecration of a bishop rang out in St Anthony's Church, Wythenshawe, on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, the feast of the Chair of St Peter, when Bishop Brian, together with his co-consecrators, Archbishop Patrick Kelly and Bishop Terence Brain, ordained Monsignor Mark Davies as Coadjutor Bishop of Shrewsbury Diocese in the presence of the Papal Nuncio, over twenty-five bishops, at least two hundred priests from both Shrewsbury and Salford Dioceses, not to mention all the laity.

It was a great joy for six parishioners from St Clare's Parish to be part of the choir assembled for this celebration –

not a 'performing' choir but, rather, an 'enabling' choir leading the assembly in its singing. During the two rehearsals in the weeks before the ordination, the sixty singers and musicians had been cajoled, complimented, corrected and conducted by Mrs Chris Malone, the superb director, so that, by the time the day came, we felt reasonably confident about the job we had to do.

The programme ranged from the powerful Taizé chant, 'Veni Sancte Spiritus', through the exhilarating 'Coventry' Gloria, to the gentle setting of Psalm 23, 'Because the Lord is

my shepherd.' The music spanned the ages, too, from the plainsong 'Ave verum' and 'Christus vincit' to the modern 'Love is His Word' and the Gathering Mass. Perhaps the music which led me most clearly to reflect on, and to thank God for, my place in the Church, the Body of Christ, was the singing of the Litany of the Saints, calling on the help of so many holy men and women from every century, culture and country, who were challenged to spread the Good News just as we are in our own age.

Another growing realization was the enormous responsibility which will rest on Bishop Mark in the years that lie ahead—but he cannot but have been heartened by the prayerful presence and support of such a vast gathering.

*Kate Hughes*



*After the Ordination: a pair of happy Bishops*  
Photo: Mazur/catholicchurch.org.uk

## *Significant changes at St Clare's*

Since September 1995 St Clare's Parish Lache has been served by the parish priest of St Anthony's Saltney (within the Diocese of Wrexham), under a formal agreement between the two dioceses. The two bishops, Bishop Brian and Bishop Edwin Regan, have recently decided that this sharing arrangement is not a satisfactory way to care for either parish. For the future it has been agreed that St Clare's will be the pastoral responsibility of the parish priest of St Werburgh's. In this connection Fr Paul Shaw will be assisted by Fr Martin

Onuoha, a priest of Ahiara Mbaise Diocese in southern Nigeria, currently working in Shrewsbury Diocese.

Welcoming this arrangement, Fr Paul said "in recent years we have built up excellent relations with St Clare's, on our joint Confirmation Programme, for example, and Altar Server Training. St Clare's is to remain an independent Parish, but looked after by Fr Martin and myself, both resident here at St Werburgh's. We very much look forward to working with St Clare's in the months and years ahead."

*More on St Clare's and Fr Martin overpage ...*

The first clear priority that Bishop Mark has identified in starting his new task in the diocese of Shrewsbury is to get to know it, to visit the diverse communities that make it up, to meet and talk to its people and priests. He has already begun to do this.

Secondly, as his chosen motto, *Nil sine Christo* (Nothing without Christ), he is focusing on prayer. "That's where we start," he says, "with prayer. Pope John Paul II said this at the start of the new millennium, that we start out with Christ. That's what I want to do at the start of this new task, and I invite the people and the clergy of the diocese to join me in this."

Bishop Mark sees a bishop's work as being a bearer of the Gospel message, but also to lead people and guide them by helping them see and recognise where hope is to be found in daily life, and amid public affairs and controversies. This means drawing attention to the source of hope and light. "That's the Lord, but it's also the Church," he explains. "And it's the sacraments, and it's the Common Good, as the bishops of England and Wales have pointed out recently in their message for the run-up to the general election. I know that this is also part of the role."

*Stephen Tierney*

## Hope Against Hope: Climate Grace

So has all hope gone? That is the feeling of many of those who took part in the UN Summit on Climate Change, the 15<sup>th</sup> Conference of Parties held in Copenhagen in December. The disappointment relates to (a) the failure to find a legally binding international agreement to follow the Kyoto agreement, and (b) the failure to listen to the intense public effort all over the world that *this moment* was the opportunity to act.

It could have been worse - a complete breakdown of relationships and no agreement at all. The political accord, that some believe is a face-saving exercise by politicians, is not legally binding, yet it does show that the international community has not yet given up. The next meeting (COP 16) in Mexico in November/December this year will begin to address some of the issues raised at COP15, but many believe that the crucial moment is now past. This, combined with recent reports that the impacts of human beings on climate change may be exaggerated, intensifies a sense of apathy combined with profound public disappointment.

But as Christians, and specifically as Catholics, there are a number of reasons why we should not give into these feelings.

First, we need to remember Paul's letter to the Romans (5: 3-5), that suffering, endurance and hope are intricately linked. If we have suffered through not being listened to, then this should make us more sensitive to the plight of millions of those marginalised in the poorest regions of the world who are already suffering through climate impacts. The hardship is literally life-threatening for many communities. Listening to their voices, like that of those living in the Tonga islands that are literally disap-

pearing, should inspire us once more to persist in our commitment.

Science works by building up empirical evidence, but this is never 100% certain, and this is also the case for climate science that is particularly complicated. However much additional 'natural' factors might come into play, the impact of human beings on CO<sub>2</sub> production since the industrial revolution is a fact that cannot be ignored. Further the disproportionate consumptive habits of a few add to the global injustices that already exist. Climate injustice is one more injustice alongside others.

In such a context, it behoves us to act well, in spite of any uncertainty, for to do nothing is to ignore the plight of millions of our fellow human beings, the devastating impact on future generations of our own families, alongside the threat of extinction of thousands of species of other kinds. Creation is not something that we can simply use for the benefit of a limited number of human beings, but rather is a precious gift of the Creator that is good in and of itself. But we can only act well in a way that genuinely works for the common global good through God's grace. In that grace hope does not disappoint us. If we are to do God's will on earth as it is in heaven, then this cannot be just on our own strength, but we need to tap into the roots of our faith.

*Celia Deane-Drummond*

*Celia, a parishioner at St Columba's, is Theological Accompanier at CAFOD and is on secondment from the Department of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Chester. Her recent book "Seeds of Hope: Facing the Challenge of Climate Justice" may be obtained from [www.cafod.org.uk/worship/environment](http://www.cafod.org.uk/worship/environment)*

## Local Pastoral Care of the Sick

In our sometimes faltering steps in working together across parish boundaries we can draw encouragement from examples of success. One such is the chaplaincy work at Countess of Chester and Bowmere hospitals, where twenty or so Catholic lay volunteers and seven local priests work in harmony, with equal numbers from other faith communities, to provide pastoral care for the sick and dying. Most of our LPA parishes and the parishes of Ellesmere Port are represented, and there is opportunity for everyone to contribute to the team's success.

Bishop Brian's Lenten Pastoral Letter refers to our "strong tradition of recognising the significance of illness, and reaching out to those who are sick and infirm." Bishop Brian encourages parishes to "take stock of the care

*given to the sick and housebound to create an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of the care we give as well as improving its quality."* He asks particularly that we consider "how seriously we take provision for the celebration of the Sacrament of the Sick."

The chaplains are working together on ways to improve the links between chaplaincy at the hospitals and the faith communities they serve. Part of this initiative is to provide clear and concise information in parishes, and we're producing a pamphlet about the structure, services and working practices of the chaplaincy team and how all people can access and assist them.

Look out for future announcements on this subject and for the pamphlet, copies of which will be available in parishes soon.

*Rev Lawrence Hordley*

## Jubilee at St Clare's

The parish church of St Clare's, Lache, celebrates its Golden Jubilee in December this year. In 1960 the present site on Downsfield Road was chosen and building began.

To mark the Jubilee it is planned to plant some flowering fruit trees, cherry and apple, on the ground between the Presbytery/Parish Room building and the North side of the church.

Some six parishioners have agreed to help create a commemorative banner and work on the design is at an early stage. The design will be mainly appliqué work so that individuals can do the stitching at home and then all come together towards the end of the project to assemble the whole.

A history of the parish was produced for our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary and this is being updated to include the period in which we have shared a priest with our neighbouring church, St Anthony's in Saltney (Wrexham Diocese) - so our priest has had to answer to not one but two Bishops.

Fund raising coffee mornings and afternoons will be held when the days are both longer and warmer, and a special event to mark the start of Advent is at an early stage of planning.

*Hugh Acworth, St. Clare's Parish*



## 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 11th May right through to 14th September.

Retiring collection.

### "CELEBRITY RECITALS"

7.30pm Admission £5.00

Tuesday 27 April  
LEE DUNLEAVY

All Saints Church, Northampton

Tuesday 21 September  
PAUL DERRETT

Hull Based Concert Organist

## Peace and Quiet—with the Bishop's Blessing!

On 12th November 2009, the children, staff, parents and governors of St Werburgh's and St Columba's Catholic Primary School were delighted to welcome Bishop Brian to join them in celebrating the official opening of a very special room in the school – "A Quiet Place." Bishop Brian attended the Liturgy, performed the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony and gave his blessing to all who were present.

A Quiet Place Experience is a new venture for the school, which provides a calm and beautiful environment where children can develop their emotional literacy; it is also used as a prayer room. Formerly a cloakroom, it is decorated with an underwater theme in deep shades of blue, and is lit with fibre-optics and fairy lights to create a safe, tranquil environment. Essential oils and calming mu-



sic are used to engage the senses and create a truly special place. The children love going there and treat the room with great respect.

This venture has been enthusiastically supported by members of the school's PTA, who, as well as making a financial contribution, rolled up their sleeves and prepared the room for the artist to create the wonderful murals.

*Debbie Penney, Headteacher*



## Notes from our High School Chaplain ...

Preparations are now underway for the refurbishment of the School Chapel and the design of the Upper Room in the 6<sup>th</sup> Form Emmaus Centre both of which will be ready for the start of the new academic year. The Chapel refurbishment will cost in the region of £10,000, and we are most grateful to Fr Paul Shaw for spearheading the Appeal, including a fund-raising concert at St Werburgh's Church on 19th March, and an "In Memoriam" scheme whereby donations will be commemorated by a special plaque in the Chapel. Please speak to Fr Paul for ways of supporting the Appeal.

The wall hangings in the new Chapel will be inspired by the religious artwork of Elizabeth Wang and, in order to involve the students in the design of their Chapel, Sue Davis from the Design Technology department has recruited a group of Year 10 GCSE students to suggest colours, fabrics and images which reflect our school

motto "Christo Fidelis". New lighting and audio visual facilities will be provided, able to be controlled remotely. The floor will be redesigned in circular fashion on two levels, in order to create a greater sense of community and intimacy when staff and students are gathered for liturgies or reflections.

Work has also begun on the design of the 'Upper Room' in the school's new Emmaus Centre. Appropriately named, the room has space for about twelve 6<sup>th</sup> Form students and the will be available for quiet meditation and reflection at lunchtime. The walls have been designed and painted by Phillip Elbourne, our Art Technician. We have also purchased a set of cushions and Philip and some of the students will be making their own cushion covers with Biblical images and quotes appropriate to an 'Upper Room'.

*Paul Lever*

The Catholic High School's spiritual 'Theme for the Week' and accompanying resources for the teachers are now available on the school's website [www.chsc.cheshire.sch.uk/](http://www.chsc.cheshire.sch.uk/) Click on the 'School Homepage', and 'Spiritual Life' in the drop-down bar. Then click on the 'Theme of the Week'. Please feel free to browse. If you have children at the school, you may like to discuss with them some of the issues arising from the themes.

## Chaplaincy work at the University

*Fr Paul brings us up to date ...*

The University of Chester is growing every year, and it's very exciting to be part of that process, assisting Rev Ian Arch, the main University Chaplain, in his work. We try to be available at two levels: to meet the denominational needs of our specifically Anglican or Catholic or Free Church students, but also to be a resource for every student, of any religious faith or none. To that end, I say Mass every Monday at 1.05pm in the beautiful University Chapel, the oldest building on the campus and the heart of the University. Everyone is warmly invited to this Mass, and many Parishioners from various Chester Parishes like to come—a real 'town and gown' link.

In addition, I am on campus every Thursday morning to meet the complete cross-section of students. Many come down to St Werburgh's for the Sunday Evening Mass, and a number come for regular Confession and Spiritual Direction - and supper! Last Christmas, twelve of them came out for an end-of-term pizza: the way to a student's soul is always through their stomach!

*Fr Paul Shaw*

## Youth SVP Activities

*Youth SVP is a Christian organisation for young people who want to put their faith into action. Volunteers give support to people in their community, meeting person-to-person and trying to assist any way they can.*

Every fortnight, 6<sup>th</sup> Formers invite the students of Dorin Park Special School to lunch at the Catholic High School. They then relax with them in the Emmaus Centre before teaching them a science lesson. Other 6<sup>th</sup> Formers entertain local elderly people in the social area. They also visit the residents of Oaklands nursing home and spend time chatting and organising bingo! Year 10 students visit St. Clare's primary school every Tuesday lunchtime. They meet the children informally in the playground before listening to their reading one-to-one.



*Members of the 6<sup>th</sup> Form Youth SVP group entertaining local elderly people at the Catholic High School*

**Chester & District Local Pastoral Area (LPA 11) comprises the RC parishes of St Clare (Lache), St Columba (Plas Newton), St Cuthbert (Mouldsworth), St Francis (City Centre), St Theresa (Blacon), St Thomas Becket (Tarpoley) and St Werburgh (City Centre).**

The LPA Team meets four times a year. Co-Chairs are Fr Russell Cooke (01244 400873) & Kate Hughes (01244 683538).

LPA Team Secretary is Syd Jones (01244 345676, daytime).

Contact for "The Chester Catholic" newsletter is Bernard Payne (01244 350323).

Website [www.chestercatholic.org.uk](http://www.chestercatholic.org.uk)

## Holy Week : Main Services across Chester & District LPA

### 25th March

6.30pm Parish Penitential Service, St Thomas Becket

### 27th March, Palm Sunday Vigil

9.45-10.15am Confessions, St Columba

11.30-12noon Confessions, St Theresa

5.30pm Vigil Mass, St Thomas Becket

6.00pm Vigil Mass, St Clare

6.30pm Vigil Mass, St Francis

6.45-7.10pm Confessions, St Columba

7.15pm Vigil Mass, St Columba

### 28th March, Palm Sunday

8.00am Mass, St Francis

9.00am Mass, St Clare, St Cuthbert, and St Werburgh

9.15am Mass, St Columba

9.30am Mass, St Francis

10.45am Mass, St Werburgh

11.00am Mass, St Anthony, St Columba St Francis, St Thomas Becket

4.30pm Mass, St Francis (Polish)

6.00pm Mass, St Werburgh

### 29th March, Monday

8.00am Mass, St Francis

9.15am Mass, St Columba

10.00-12noon Confessions, St Werburgh

11.00-12noon Confessions, St Francis

12noon Mass, St Francis

12.15pm Mass, St Werburgh

7.00-10.00pm Confessions, St Werburgh

### 30th March, Tuesday

8.00am Mass, St Francis

9.15am Mass, St Columba

10.00-12noon Confessions, St Werburgh

11.00-12noon Confessions, St Francis

12noon Mass, St Francis

12.15pm Mass, St Werburgh

7.00pm Service of Reconciliation, St Theresa

7.30pm Liturgy of Reconciliation,

St Werburgh, opportunities for individual Confessions

### 31st March, Wednesday

8.00am Mass, St Francis

9.15am Mass, St Columba

11.00-12noon Confessions, St Francis

12noon Mass, St Francis

12.15pm Mass, St Werburgh

7.00-10.00pm Confessions, St Werburgh

### 1st April, Maundy Thursday

11.00-12noon Confessions, St Francis

12.15pm Mass, St Werburgh

7.00pm Mass of the Lord's Supper, St Clare

7.30pm Mass of the Lord's Supper, St Francis, Watching until Night Prayer at 10.30pm.

7.30pm Mass of the Lord's Supper, St Theresa, Watching until Night Prayer at 11pm

7.30pm Mass of the Lord's Supper, St Werburgh, Watching until midnight

8.00pm Mass of the Lord's Supper, St Columba

8.00pm Mass of the Lord's Supper, St Cuthbert, Watching until 10pm.

### 2nd April, Good Friday

9.30am 'Walk of Witness' start at St Anthony's

9.45-10.45am Confessions, St Columba

10.00am Children's Way of the Cross, St Werburgh

11.00am Stations of the Cross, St Thomas Becket

11.15am Family Stations of the Cross, St Columba

11.15am Stations of the Cross, St Theresa

11.30am Ecumenical Silent March of Witness, start Chester Town Hall

12noon Stations of the Cross, St Francis

12noon Service of Witness at The Parade, Blacon

3.00pm Liturgy of The Passion, St Clare, St Columba, St Francis, St Theresa, St Thomas Becket, and St Werburgh

7.30pm Annual Ecumenical Service, Chester Cathedral, led this year by Churches Together in Lache and Saltney

### 3rd April, Holy Saturday

10.00am Morning Prayer, St Theresa

11.00-12noon Confessions, St Francis

4.00-5.00pm Confessions, St Francis

8.00pm Vigil Mass of Easter, St Anthony, St Clare, St Columba, St Theresa, and St Thomas Becket

8.30pm Vigil Mass of Easter, St Werburgh

9.00pm Vigil Mass of Easter, St Francis

12midnight Mass of Easter, St Werburgh

### 4th April, Easter Day

6.30am Ecumenical Dawn Service, The Groves Bandstand, followed by breakfast at Wesley Methodist Church, St John Street.

8.00am Mass of Easter, St Francis

9.00am Mass of Easter, St Cuthbert, and St Werburgh

9.15am Mass of Easter, St Columba

9.30am Mass of Easter, St Clare and St Francis

10.00am Mass of Easter, St Theresa

10.45am Mass of Easter, St Werburgh

11.00am Mass of Easter, St Anthony, St Columba, St Francis, and St Thomas Becket

4.30pm Mass, St Francis (Polish)

6.00pm Mass of Easter, St Werburgh

*The Clergy and LPA Team of Chester & District wish you all a Blessed and Joyful Easter.*

## Getting to know Fr Martin

*We invited the new arrival to tell us a little about himself ...*

I am Fr Martin Ifeanyichukwu Onuoha, a priest of the Catholic Diocese of Ahiara Mbaise in Imo State, Nigeria. The third among nine brothers and sisters, I enrolled into the minor seminary when I was eleven years old. After 17 formative years, I was ordained on the 4<sup>th</sup> of August 2001.

I worked in my home diocese for three years as an assistant parish priest and two years as a parish priest before being sent to Rome for specialization in dogmatic theology. After completing my Licentiate in *The Pontifical University of the Holy Cross* Rome, I

agreed with my bishop to be in a parish setting while I write my doctoral thesis.

Based on some understanding between my local ordinary, Bishop V. A. Chikwe and Bishop Brian, I have been working in the Diocese of Shrewsbury since November 2008. St Joseph's Parish Birkenhead has been my parish of residence while I supplied in parishes in the diocese where the need arose, until the recent posting by the bishop to St Werburgh's and St Clare's Chester.

Pray for me to remain always ready and happy to serve. God bless you!



*Fr Martin meets some young friends at St Joseph's Primary School, Birkenhead*