



2017 Annual Report



Parish Prayer

Lord, you who said:
“Behold I make all things new”
Send forth your Spirit and
renew the heart of your parish.
Renew what is weary and worn.
Restore what is old and fragile.
Reclaim what has been lost.
Fill us anew with your gifts.
Gifts to love, gifts to heal.
So that we, in turn, may help
others to know and love you.

Amen.

Dear Parishioners,

The Annual Report provides information to inform newcomers and existing parishioners of parish activities undertaken by various groups.

The people involved in these groups have freely given of their time to aid parish faith development, support St Joseph's Church, serve others within and outside the Church community and in doing so serve God. On behalf of the parish I thank all those involved and the Carmelite Community who have served St Joseph's for over 100 years. For that we are very grateful particularly as we are fortunate to have several priests whereas other parishes are lucky if they have one.

I do not propose to go into great detail of what has been done and what has been achieved but encourage you to read the contents. Of particular note are:

- Instruction and support to those who desire to become Catholics and those who wish to explore and develop their faith,
- Work to train and develop our young persons,
- Planning of liturgical celebrations throughout the year,
- Church cleaning and decorating with wonderful floral displays,
- Support and assistance to the less fortunate within our parish community and to those within the wider community,
- Contributions of time to organise various social events and raise funds,
- Financial support by Gift Aid, donations and weekly collections without which our parish would not continue to develop.

Despite the major work to the roof and within the church which was completed in 2016 there remain snagging issues. Greater detail is contained within the financial report as are improvements planned for access for those with mobility impairment and other developments which are being pursued.

On behalf of the parish, once again, I extend thanks to all of you for your contributions of time, commitment and finance that ensure the smooth running of the parish. For those of you who are not currently involved PLEASE speak to members of the group(s) who will welcome your interest and support.

We thank God for the support of the Carmelite Community and for the encouragement from Fr Michael, Fr Bob and Fr Maurice and others at these times. Let us not forget that they also need our support and prayers.

May God bless you all.

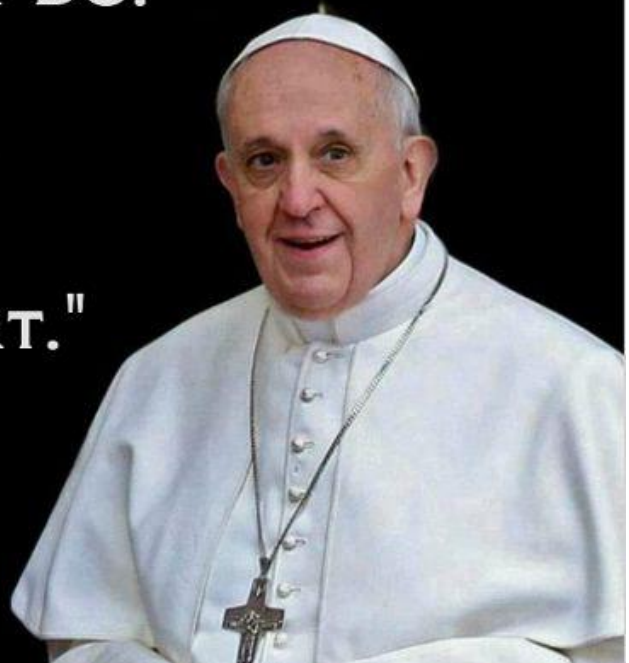
Yours sincerely,

John Bates
Chairman, St Joseph's Parish Council

**"HELP ONE ANOTHER
THIS IS WHAT JESUS TEACHES US.
THIS IS WHAT I DO.**

**AND I DO IT
WITH MY HEART."**

- POPE FRANCIS



Carmelite Community

For the Carmelites it was the triennial year of change and moving. Our most momentous move was to close the retreat house at Preston. The catalyst was the vocation fall off on these islands. Simply, there was no Discalced Carmelites to do the work in Preston and so Tabor Community closed after 16 busy and innovative years. The Carmelite Nuns there are allowing some of the Tabor groups to continue at their convent. Here Fr Martin was replaced by Fr Bob and the rest of us live to fight another day.



Carmelite Chapter May 2017

This is a large and busy parish. Since our AGM last year we celebrated **47** baptisms and **16** marriages. We conducted **18** funerals in St Joseph's as well as leading several funeral services in local crematoria. We also had some very special Masses; **66** children made their First Holy Communion and **35** young people were confirmed. **2** adults were baptised and, together with **1** other, were confirmed and made their First Communion at the Easter Vigil.

Thank you to everyone who has been involved in preparing and supporting the children, young people and adults on their journey of faith.

We currently have **1,103** families registered in the parish with a Catholic population of **2,845**. Our average Sunday Mass attendance (including all churches) is **710**.

Fr Michael Spain
Prior & Parish Priest

Finance Committee

YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2017

GENERAL

At the year ended 31st March 2017, I am pleased to report that our accounts, which were independently audited last July, are showing an operating profit of **£13,506**. In summary, income, excluding legacies, donations and Together-in-Faith, amounted to **£264,890**, whilst expenditure was **£251,384** - a profit of **5.1%** - a good improvement on last year, showing an average weekly Income surplus of **£260**, compared to last year's weekly average loss of **£272**. The detailed accounts are at the end of this report.

There is no doubt that this improvement in our finances is mostly due to the generous response of many of our parishioners, following the publication and distribution last September of our pamphlet "*Supporting Your Parish*" that was delivered to all registered parishioners.

The pamphlet not only informs parishioners of the various options there are to donate but it also suggests how decisions on how much to donate can be made. It also gives parishioners information on why the money is needed and how it is spent. Items we all expect and take for granted, such as Altar Candles, Communion Hosts and Wine, to say nothing of heating and lighting, telephone, photocopying, printing, IT equipment and maintenance, the list is never ending and, thank God, many parishioners have responded generously to our appeal for everyone to consider whether or not their personal weekly contributions take all the Church's needs into account. Hence the surplus for which we are very grateful. "*Supporting Your Parish*" also serves as a reminder that, in common with everyone else, the Church is also subject to inflation and we should review at least once a year the amount we can afford to pay for our spiritual needs.

Once again, I must thank the many volunteers whose generous gift of their time saves the parish countless sums of money. Every time we publish and dispatch circulars like "*Supporting Your Parish*" or the letter about Parish Day with raffle tickets to the whole parish we save over £700 in postage stamps. How much would we have to pay to keep our Church as clean as it is without our volunteer cleaners? How much would it cost us to pay for our beautiful flower arrangements every week without the voluntary work of our flower ladies? We thank God for all our willing volunteers and pray that He will continue to inspire many more willing parishioners, particularly our younger members, to donate their talents and a little of their time to their Church.

GIFT AID

Gift Aiding remains a very important source of parish income. Tax refunds for the year amounted to **£29,654**, slightly less, but broadly similar to last year. This income, as Gift Aiders will know, is derived from Inland Revenue refunds of tax already paid by them on their donations and so, it costs tax-paying donors absolutely nothing but it has the effect of increasing their contributions by 25%, making each pound donated worth £1.25. Our efforts to continue to encourage tax payers to gift aid their donations are on-going.

EVENTS INCOME

The **200 Club** has been successfully re-launched, and at the end of the year, we had 101 parishioners competing for the monthly prizes. At the year end the income since the relaunch was **£5,040**, which was shared 50/50 between prize winners and the parish. This valuable contribution went towards our general administration costs. We would of course like to see the number of participants reaching 200, which would make the monthly draw an even more attractive prize to win as, the greater the number of participants, the higher the prize for the winners. Parishioners can join the 200 Club at any time and their number will be included in the draw the month after they join.

Thanks to Celia Tobin and Christine Gosling, the annual Parish Raffle and Parish Day have survived and some minor events, organised and run by a few willing volunteers on a one-off basis did also take place but, as we have yet to find a volunteer to organise and run fund-raising events, our income from Events has been badly affected. Using Parish Day as a model, it has been suggested that we should produce an annual calendar of popular fund-raising events and then ask for parish volunteers to organise and run just one of those events. Of course, this would need to be carefully organised and managed to ensure that events were held as planned and would not clash with other parish activities, but we would not be asking for an individual volunteer to undertake the running of all events planned. We would need an Events Co-ordinator, whose responsibilities would be to find volunteer organisers for each event and to help each organiser to plan and market the relevant event. Such events in the parish are vitally important, not only because much-needed funds can be raised but, more so, because of the community spirit that is created by bringing parishioners together on such social occasions. Alternative suggestions as to how we can re-introduce EVENTS would be welcomed as indeed would any parishioner who was willing to undertake such an important task.



THE FURNITURE MARKET

The Furniture Market is another reliable and valuable source of income for the parish. This year the hard-working volunteers who run the market, contributed **£15,500** towards our running costs. A similar amount was distributed to many other good causes but their outreach efforts did not end there. Good and essential furniture was provided to many either free of charge or at prices that could be afforded. St Joseph's Furniture Market is the envy of many other parishes in our Diocese and we are fortunate and grateful for all the volunteers who work so hard for the good of our parish.

MAINTENANCE

Maintenance costs this year at **£20,882** were substantially lower than the previous year mostly due to the loss of our church in Chalfont St Giles. The sale of the Infant of Prague was delayed as, initially, planning consent for "Change of use" was not granted. We now have the Planning Consent and the property is being remarketed by the Diocese. Maintenance in the parish was kept well under control.

REFURBISHMENT

Whilst there are still some issues on our "snagging" list to be resolved and some on-going problems with sound quality in the church, most of the refurbishment programme has now been completed. The majority of parishioners seem to be satisfied with the results and many visitors have commented on the beauty of our church. Having changed the microphones on the lectern there has been an improvement in the sound production, however, there still a need to train some of our readers and visiting priests on using the microphones. We are systematically introducing sound-absorbing panels in the church to reduce the echo in the building. This should provide the improvements we need in the **acoustics**. The final retention payment of **£19,583.34** for the refurbishment was made by the Diocese in March, bringing the total refurbishment cost for the project to **£1,118,505.05**. Details of these accounts are held at the Diocese.

ONGOING PROJECTS AND STILL TO BE CONSIDERED

Whilst the most important work has now been completed there are still outstanding issues that need to be addressed. The main ones - not in any order of priority - are these:

- **The Chantry Chapel** - This beautiful and historical part of the church is in need of cleaning and some repair to the original marble and mosaics. A survey has been carried out by a Diocese Historian expert and his report, with recommendations is awaited. One of the original stained-glass windows, over the side door to the Vestry, should be revealed at the same time and our Lady's Altar and mosaics need specialised cleaning.

- **Cemetery Memorial Wall and Gate** - The parish-wide consultation was completed with many parishioners expressing support for the project. We have considered the comments received and are now in a position to be able to finalise the various works specifications and then seek Diocese approval for the project. We do not see funding being an obstacle for this project.
- **New Side Entrance for the Less-Able and Car Park Improvements** - Orders for the new doors and equipment for the new entrance have been placed and once these are delivered we will go ahead with the construction of the new entrance. Before we can progress with the car park enhancements however we require planning consent and we will have to fund-raise for the work.
- **Parish Hall and Centre** - In order to establish the needs that the Hall and Parish Centre should satisfy, the current regular users are being consulted. A parish-wide consultation (as with the Cemetery) will be organised in the near future, following which we will produce an “End” plan for the refurbishment/rebuilding of the Centre. Planning consent should not be a problem but we will need to have funds available before we can gain approval from the Diocese.
- **The Holy Name in Denham** would benefit from the addition of another room or covered area with some meeting facilities. There are no facilities for the less able on the premises and these should be considered as soon as possible.

FINALLY

I wish to express my gratitude to all my colleagues who give up so much of their time to carry out the many tasks I ask them to do. My thanks also go to Father's Michael, Bob and Maurice for their support and spiritual guidance and to Joan Barham, Helena Sullivan and Karen Peters for all their patience, help and welcome cups of tea. May our Good Lord bless them all for all the good work they do to make our parish such a good home for all our parishioners.

John Forte

Chairman, St Joseph's Finance Committee

Financial Statement

YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2017

	<i>Year to March 2017</i>	<i>Year to March 2016</i>
INCOME		
Offertory Thro'parish	133,337	128,072
Thro' diocese	51,382	50,108
Tax Refunds	<u>29,654</u>	<u>29,863</u>
	214,373	208,043
Rental Income	10,965	8,308
Fundraising	14,755	4,128
Furniture Market	15,500	13,050
Events Team	----	5,970
Together in Faith	12,915	94,295
Stole Fees	5,610	----
Legacies and Donations	5,787	62,911
Repository	<u>3,687</u>	<u>3,891</u>
	69,219	192,553
TOTAL INCOME	<u>283,592</u>	<u>400,596</u>
EXPENDITURE		
Liturgical	18,751	22,158
Domestic	24	53
Establishment	58,920	52,958
Insurance	6,693	6,335
Office	5,934	7,022
Travel	69	4,961
Carmelites	20,000	20,000
Personnel	76,429	71,244
Property/Maintenance	20,882	27,661
Fixed Assets	----	828
New Boilers	----	----
Parish Centenary Costs	----	----
Schools	----	----
Fundraising Costs	2,473	----
Repository	6,127	8,494
Diocese Levy	33,155	32,357
Church Refurbishment	----	----
NCF/CES/CYS Levies	1,927	2,136
Misc/Donations	----	1,314
Interest	----	----
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	<u>251,384</u>	<u>257,521</u>
Surplus/Deficit of Income over Expenditure	<u>32,208</u>	<u>143,075</u>
Surplus/Deficit Net of TIF/Legacy	19,293	-14,131

	<i>Year to March 2017</i>	<i>Year to March 2016</i>
CAPITAL ACCOUNT		
Balance b/f at 1 April 2016	204,287	61,212
Centenary Fund	----	----
Denham Roof/Insurance Claim	----	----
Surplus/(Defecit) for Year to Date	<u>32,208</u>	<u>143,075</u>
	<u>236,495</u>	<u>204,287</u>
Represented by:		
Cash and Bank	7,816	5,977
Less Accruals re Restricted Receipts	-28,892	-21,440
Accruals re Carmelites Salaries	----	-5,000
Due from/(to) Diocese ex Refurb	<u>257,571</u>	<u>224,750</u>
	<u>236,495</u>	<u>204,287</u>
 Church Refurbishment Cost to Date	 1,101,435	 1,011,420
Net Due from/(to) Diocese ex Legacy	-843,864	-786,670
Nancy Deeves Legacy	754,427	754,427
Net Due from/(to) Diocese	-89,437	-32,243



Safeguarding and Health & Safety

The parish maintenance and improvement program and the Health & Safety of our parish are overseen by the Finance Committee.

Health & Safety is concerned with the practices and processes in place within the church to ensure the safety of all who are involved in any church activity or who use church facilities.

Safeguarding which complements Health & Safety covers the practices and processes in place to ensure the wellbeing of children and vulnerable persons who use St Joseph's Church, Parish Centre, Hall, Grounds or who are involved in parish activities.

As good Catholics it is the responsibility of all to ensure their own safety, the safety of those for whom they are responsible and for those who are less able or vulnerable.

CCTV cameras have been installed and security arrangements for staff and the priests are being reviewed by the Finance Committee. Your co-operation with these changes will be appreciated as they are also for your safety.

Thanks to those who assist with the Health and Safety Inspections, the carrying out of general improvement works and all those who assist in ensuring a safe environment for the young and vulnerable persons.

John Bates
Safeguarding and Health & Safety



Evangelisation

THE BIG PICTURE (*Bible Study Course*)



This twelve week course helped participants journey through Salvation History. Two identical sessions were run each week allowing a choice of meeting in the morning or in the evening. The morning session attracted 25 regular participants, with the evening sessions averaging 30 people. People from our Pastoral Area and other local Catholic Churches joined us. The course encouraged everyone to spend 20 minutes digging in the Scriptures each day - with interesting and helpful discussions taking place in the weekly groups along with a short DVD with input from experts and testimonies from lay people living out the Scriptures in everyday life. Feedback from those who took part indicated an interest in further courses perhaps following one of the Gospels.

BAPTISM COURSE – With You Always (*Christine Cornwell*)

Since July 2016 we have run the Baptism Formation sessions for parents bringing their children for Baptism on five occasions.

Approximately 33 couples have attended the course, some of them for the second time since the course began in 2014. The Baptism team remains very enthusiastic and committed, however, unfortunately we have lost some people from the team since we started either because they have moved away from the parish or they have other parish commitments. We would very much welcome new members to the team, particularly to help with refreshments or the care of the siblings in the crèche. If anyone is interested then please ask the Parish Office for contact details.

The aspects of the course involve an initial meeting with a priest and catechist who outline the course details and commitment involved as well as registering the child for Baptism. Parents then attend the Rite of Welcome on the first Sunday followed by three formation sessions on consecutive Sundays following the 9am Mass. Prior to the Baptism of their child we invite them to an evening when we discuss the arrangements for the Baptismal Liturgy.



The course continues to be well received by parents and they are always most appreciative of the team.

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY GROUP (*Mike Burton*)

We meet every month for a shared meal, fellowship and a Bible Study discussion of some kind. This year we concluded our guided study of St Paul's letter to the Romans, and are currently following a DVD series of various saints. Of 18 total members we usually have 8-12 at each meeting.

The group grew from the Harvesters annual Men's Weekend retreats, as a way for men to continue sharing and exploring their faith throughout the year after the retreat. As a result of this we also include men from other nearby parishes such as Missenden, Uxbridge and Ruislip.

On a practical level we help the nearby Catholic Worker Farm with manual tasks like setting up marquees for their summer events, and would be keen to help to other groups in similar ways. Please contact us via the Parish Office if you know of such a need, or if you would like to join us.

MOTHERS PRAYERS (*Jackie Higson*)

Mothers Prayers is for mothers who wish to pray together for their children and grandchildren. This worldwide group was founded by an English woman 20 years ago and our participation helps to ensure that all children everywhere are held in constant prayer.

***"Stop your crying and wipe away your tears.
All that you have done for your children
will not go unrewarded."
Jeremiah 31:16***

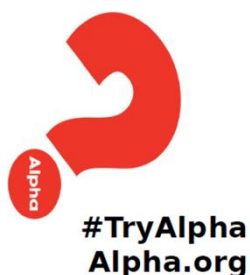
During our meetings we unite in prayer with one another and place the names of our children into a basket at the foot of the cross, offering them into Jesus' care. The format is simple and prayerful and includes group prayer, a gospel reading and individual (written) intercessions.

In the past year we have had two groups running, a morning group for young mums and their small children, and an evening group involving mothers from both St Joseph's and neighbouring parishes. Both groups are ecumenical.

We would like to say farewell and a huge thank you to Michaela for her amazing leadership and witness, and we wish her and her family well in the Cor et Lumen Christi Community in Cumbria.

Going forward, Jackie and Ros will be leading the group, which will meet monthly on a weekday evening. All mothers are welcome to join and should make contact via the Parish Office.

ALPHA – Churches Working Together *(John Moroz)*



We were not able to run an Alpha Course within the parish but were asked to help with the course being run at The Breadhouse. I offered to help and was warmly welcomed onto the team consisting of people drawn from Gold Hill, Hope Church, St Peter's and St Joseph's. The course ran from September to December 2016 and had an average of about 30 people attending not including the organising team. This included one parishioner from St Joseph's. There was a Holy Spirit Day held at Christ Church Chorleywood. The new set of Alpha videos were shown and there were a number of speakers giving testimonies including Fiona Castle.

The course is being run again this year from September to December. I have offered to help again. Also Sally Taylor and Caroline Taylor from our parish have offered to help. The course has been publicised in our newsletter, fliers have been printed and are available at the back of the church and there is also an entry on our website plus a link to the main Alpha website.

HEALING PRAYER MINISTRY *(John Moroz)*

This has been continued throughout the period from last September to the end of July when the 9am Mass stops for the summer break. The team has been reduced to 8 after one couple decided they were no longer able to commit to helping. Despite this we have been able to offer prayer ministry on all but one Sunday when no team was available (other than Christmas and Easter). In that period we had 28 people coming up for prayer, with the number each week varying from none to four on one occasion.

We should try and publicise the prayer ministry more to allow more people to take advantage of it. An entry will be put in the newsletter shortly and at intervals throughout the year. We should also try and encourage more people to consider joining the prayer team; this is best done by personal approach.

In November of last year, four of the team went on a prayer ministry training day given by the Christian Healing Mission (CHM). This was a very practical day with guidelines given by the director Rev John Ryland, plus practice sessions and some workshops. Those that went felt it was very helpful.

Charles Whitehead is a trustee of CHM, an ecumenical mission, and suggested that we may be able to ask John Ryland to come to our parish to lead a workshop day to equip people to pray alongside. So a day has been arranged for Saturday, 2nd December. This has been mentioned to other local churches and there is interest from some of them. This event also needs to be publicised both within our parish, local churches and other Catholic churches nearby.

FUTURE EVENTS



RISE THEATRE “*Romero - Heartbeat of El Salvador*”

Rise Theatre returns to St Joseph’s on Wednesday, 4th October with their new production “*Romero - Heartbeat of El Salvador*”. The production tells the true story of Blessed Oscar Romero and his heart for the oppressed people of El Salvador. Romero chose to challenge those in power and stand up for social justice. He demanded respect for human rights.

*Blessed Oscar Romero's famous quote:
“Aspire not to have more, but to be more.”*

Bible Study Course

Plans are in progress to have something for the New Year.

Evangelii Gaudium
The Challenge

- “An authentic faith—which is never comfortable or completely personal—always involves a deep desire to change the world, to transmit values, to leave this earth somehow better than we found it.”
4:183

Animate
Prayer, Formation, Animators, JPIC, Apostolate, Listening, Love, Empathy, Fraternity, Spirituality, Compassion, Conversion, Mindfulness, Peace

Sally Taylor

Evangelisation Activity Group Leader

Liturgy & Church

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS *(Ros Burton)*

The role of Eucharistic Ministers is to minister the Body and Blood of Christ to the assembled faithful and to take the Eucharist to sick and housebound parishioners, who are unable to get to Mass. In reality, the role of each Eucharistic Minister is to draw faith from the people of God, to become more and more like the Body and Blood of Christ.



Thank you to all of our Eucharistic Ministers who serve the Priests and the parish at both Sunday and weekday Masses, and also our special Masses at Christmas, Easter, First Holy Communion and Confirmation. Our rotas work very well and Ministers are always happy to deputise in case of unforeseen absence.

We had a most enjoyable Day of Reflection and Recommissioning lead by Fr Martin, in January, followed by a delicious shared lunch, with over 50 Eucharistic Ministers and Readers attending.

MASS READERS *(Des Francis, Robert Thompson, Mary Forsyth, Kevin Murphy)*

The Ministry of proclaiming God's Word aloud for others is both a privilege and a challenge. Our Readers are entrusted with the sharing of God's Word, and through them people have the opportunity to receive the Good News of the Father's purpose and His love; through that proclamation, they will be given light and life.

Thank you to all Mass Readers for your faithful service throughout the year, especially at Christmas, Easter and Pentecost and during Holy Days of Obligation.

We had a most enjoyable Day of Reflection and Recommissioning lead by Fr Martin, in January, followed by a delicious shared lunch, with over 50 Readers and Eucharistic Ministers attending.

In June four of our Readers attended a reflection course run by the Diocese at St Columba's in Chesham, which they found very informative and encouraging.



If you are interested in serving in this important ministry please speak to one of the Priests or your Mass Representative.

CHURCH CLEANING (*Fiona Davitt*)

Thank you to our wonderful and hardworking team who do such marvellous work looking after the Church, Sacristy and Oratory each week.

We welcome Fiona Davitt, who has been leading our cleaning activities since the beginning of the year. Fiona has brought on board some new faces, including young mums from the school and our youth Confirmation candidates (as part of their service projects) which has given the ministry a well needed boost.

We work in teams on roughly a five-week cycle and we are always happy to welcome new volunteers.



FLOWER ARRANGERS (*Maureen Murphy*)



A huge thank you to our talented flower arrangers who create the beautiful arrangements each week and for the special celebrations of Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, First Communion, Confirmation and weddings. Many hours go into planning, buying, arranging and caring for the flowers.

We have a good team of arrangers and are always happy to welcome new people of all abilities. We are very pleased to welcome two new trainees. Donations towards the cost of the flowers are always welcome (particularly for Christmas and Easter).

Thank you also to the team who arrange flowers in the Oratory, especially as these are often grown with love from their own gardens.



Thank you to all our many singers and musicians who have provided music at our Sunday Masses, our celebrations of Christmas, Easter and Pentecost as well as our sacramental liturgies for Baptism, First Holy Communion and Confirmation.

Music provision during Sunday Mass:

- 9am Nan Jacobson and the Children's Choir
Rehearsals on Sundays after Mass in the Hall
- 9:30am Richard Cottle and Holy Name Choir
Rehearsals as required
- 11am Louise Langley and Choir
Rehearsals on Monday 7:30pm–8:30pm in St Joseph's Church
- 5:30pm Virginie Penney, Choir and Music Group
Rehearsals on Tuesdays 6pm–7pm in St Joseph's Church

The **Children's Choir** not only sing enthusiastically at Mass, but they are in great demand to entertain the residents of care homes at Christmas and Easter. Guests at the SVP Garden Party each summer enjoy the singing and dancing of the choir, dressed in their colourful costumes. It is also invited to sing at special Masses in the church. New members are always welcome.

The **Holy Name Choir** sings at Mass every week but makes an extra effort on the first Sunday of each month with sung Mass parts, etc. A joyful musical highlight at Denham is the Christmas Eve Mass, preceded by carols. The choir has built up a good reputation over the years in the parish and often joins together with singers from St Joseph's for special services or big events, with the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Maundy Thursday being a particularly lovely and moving choral highlight. The choir has recently strengthened ties with St Mary's Church in Denham and we now join forces a few times a year to sing at services together or to present ecumenical concerts. The musical director is Richard Cottle.

The **11am Choir** sings on a regular weekly basis. It is led by Louise Langley, a well known local musician and musical director. New members are warmly welcomed.

Thank you and farewell to Draz Sliz who led our **5:30pm Music Group** and welcome to Virginie Penney who has taken over as leader. New singers are most welcome, especially young people.

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION *(Joan Barham)*

Eucharistic Adoration is adoring or honouring the Eucharistic Presence of Christ. In a deeper sense, it involves the contemplation of the Mystery of Christ truly present before us. During Adoration, we watch and wait, we remain silent in His presence and open ourselves to His graces which flow from the Eucharist. By worshipping the Eucharistic Jesus, we become what God wants us to be. The Lord draws us to Himself and gently transforms us.



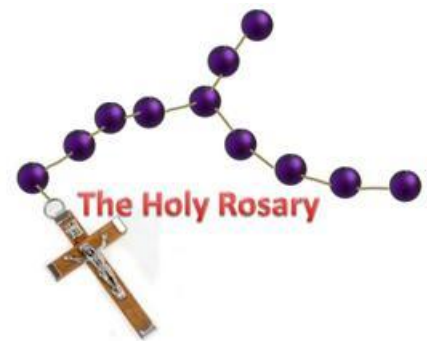
Thank you to all the parishioners who sit with the Blessed Sacrament on Wednesday and Thursday throughout the year. We have regular Adorers who take on one hour slots, but anyone is welcome to come along to pray between 10am and 9pm on a Wednesday and Thursday during term time. This is a beautiful and very blessed way to spend time in prayer. Please speak to one of the Priests or Eucharistic Ministers for more information.

ROSARY CIRCLE *(Christine Cornwell)*

The Rosary Group continues to meet every Tuesday and Friday at 7:30pm in the Oratory to pray the Rosary for the needs of our parish and any individual personal intentions for which we are asked to pray.

We are currently a very small group but committed to the Rosary Circle which has existed in our parish for over 40 years. October is, in fact, the month of the Holy Rosary, so we invite you to come and join us in this traditional Catholic devotion.

We are a very small group with approx 7-8 regular members and a few others who join us occasionally. Unfortunately, during the year we lost two couples who were very regular attendees. We would like to thank everyone who joins us whenever they are able to.



BOOKSHOP & REPOSITORY *(Ros Burton, Margie Carter, Marie Godfrey)*

The Bookshop and Repository provides Catholic Bibles, books and Missals, prayer books, devotionals, children's Bibles, Rosary beads, statues, traditional items, charity Christmas cards and Christian greetings cards as a service to the parish. You are welcome to browse at any time and pay for your purchases in the secure facility provided. Bibles and Missals can be ordered through the Parish Office.

SACRISTAN TEAM

The role of the Sacristan Team is many and varied and involves a large number of parishioners. The duties carried out during the year include:

- Preparations for Sacramental celebrations and special days, including Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Easter Triduum, Feast of St Joseph, First Holy Communion, Confirmation, Christmas, Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals
- Care and restocking of communion breads and wine
- Laundering and repair of Vestments, Albs and Altar Linen
- Organising altar candles, votives, incense and coals

Thank you to everyone who helps keep the church in good order and looking beautiful.

HOLY NAME, DENHAM *(Sarah Hampel)*

We have a good number of Readers (16), Eucharistic Ministers (18) and Flower arrangers/Cleaners (12). Lists are compiled twice a year and everyone is happy to adhere to them, asking someone else to do their particular duty if they are unable to do so. The Eucharistic Ministers take Communion to a small number of elderly and housebound parishioners every Sunday after Mass. Our small Choir, under the excellent direction of Richard Cottle, sings on the first Sunday of the month as well as on other occasions.

Looking after our beautiful church is something which takes hours of work by many dedicated parishioners. So that we can continue this important work of stewardship we would like to invite all parishioners to be part of this experience. If you would like to know more about volunteering and how you can be more active in the parish please speak to one of our priests, to your Mass Representative, to the ladies in the Parish Office, or to one of the Activity Group leaders.

Ros Burton
Liturgy & Church Activity Group Leader

Outreach

Here is our report for the last year covering the activities of the following groups (in no particular order) which are, as the name suggests, all trying in different ways to reach out and help others. All are hoping to attract more parishioners to join in that work.

JUSTICE & PEACE GROUP (*Sister Mary-Christa*)

Ideally the majority of mankind wants to live in a world where Justice and Peace prevail everywhere -to try to live out Jesus' second commandment to **"Love your neighbour as yourself"**. Realistically we know in many parts of the world people suffer from tyranny and exploitation - physically and emotionally. So in starting a parish group for Justice and Peace it would only be a small drop in a very large ocean. However oceans are made up millions of small drops.

In our parish of St Joseph's we have about 12 active members in the group with many who are interested and will pray for our projects being kept in touch by e-mail. At our meetings we discuss the current project(s) to see how they are coming on. Any member can suggest a new project, which is then discussed to see whether members want to take it on.



Our first project promoted by Maureen Turnbull was to make our parish a fair trade parish by using fair-trade coffee and tea. This was readily accepted by the then parish council and the certificate issued by CAFOD is on display in the First Committee Room. There is a strong connection with the Traidcraft group which for many years has been selling its goods once a month after the Sunday morning Masses. Traidcraft is exclusively fair trade but other fair trade products are available in all good supermarkets with a very wide range, especially of teas and coffees. The UK is strong in fair trade with a majority of bananas bearing the Fair Trade mark.

Each year we promote Fair Trade Fortnight and group members usually give a presentation one evening to the children taking part in the confirmation programme. Fair trade is not just about food; for example, Fr Michael has been spotted wearing fair trade socks. Fair trade gives everyone the opportunity of helping subsistence farmers in poorer countries. It's not a case of handouts. The programme is closely audited and profits go to improving the local infrastructure with projects such as clean water, schools, roads, etc.





In the last year the group, with Ged Nolan in the lead role, has taken on the promotion of CAFOD's work in the parish. This is to supplement the excellent work already undertaken by Nan Jacobson and her helpers with the parish Lenten and harvest soup lunches. This year Lenten Fast Day raised £3,100 through the second collection and £700 through the soup lunch; particularly pleasing was that over 50% had been gift aided. The total for Harvest 2016 and Lent 2017 was a magnificent £6,539.16 which will enable CAFOD partners to work with people and communities across the world where the need is greatest.

The CAFOD supporters' day for the south of the diocese was held at St Joseph's on 18th February 2017. Many thanks to St Joseph's and to Nan, Maura and Mary for all their help in hosting and making the day, involving those from parishes in the southern part of the Northampton Diocese, such a success. Our visitors were most impressed with the church and the facilities St Joseph's has available.



Anything concerned with the Church's social teaching comes within the group's terms of reference which are therefore very wide indeed. Thus over the past year a couple of quiz nights have been organised for the parish with proceeds going to the Bishop's appeal for a social centre next to the cathedral and to Aid for the Church in Need, the UK branch of a world-wide Vatican charity providing help to those facing persecution because of their Christian faith, which is especially relevant currently because of events in Iraq, Syria and Nigeria.



For some time the group has been concerned at the often inadequate facilities generally available for those with disabilities of whatever nature. For example one of the campaigns we supported on the group's inception was the case of the man with autism facing deportation to the USA and the likelihood of a lengthy prison term. We were concerned that the facilities at St Joseph's were far from satisfactory and are pleased that at last some real progress is in the offing.

The Gold Hill Baptist Church offers a counselling service and we took their advice as to whether we could do something similar. The upshot was that it was far too ambitious and in any event the Gold Hill service is available to all who wish to take advantage of it, including our own parishioners. This did however initiate a discussion which in a roundabout way led to us thinking our parish facilities were under used by the parish itself.

Thus the Thursday afternoon “*Tea and a Chat*” sessions, led by Margaret Thorn, evolved. They run from 2pm to 4pm in the First Committee Room. While they are similar to Tea in the Pot they are open to all comers.

Members have volunteered to help at The Mount Prison at Bovingdon, both within the prison and at the Visitor Centre which provides refreshments mostly for wives and children of prisoners. At the time of writing such facilities are on hold because of the recent disturbances within the prison which is suffering from staffing shortages.

Periodically we support campaigns being promoted by CAFOD, Amnesty and other people. For example currently there is a campaign to persuade Sainsburys, who are back-tracking on selling fair trade tea, and, sadly, two long-standing campaigns to free the two Britons with dual nationality imprisoned in Iran as some sort of bargaining chips.

Our meetings are held at Holy Cross Convent at roughly six weekly intervals and are advertised in the parish newsletter. They normally last no more than an hour. New members are always welcome. So why not give it a try? There are no strings and no long list of hidden jobs waiting to be done; indeed there is no list at all. Meetings start with fair trade tea or coffee.

CAMEROON EDUCATION FUND (*Christine Cornwell*)

For the past thirteen years our parish has provided support to some of the orphaned and vulnerable children in the Diocese of Kumbo, Cameroon by paying the school fees through the Family Life Apostolate. We are most grateful for your continued generosity in supporting the education of these children.



Family Life staff attending to an orphan/vulnerable school child

During the last year Cameroon has faced challenging times. The country is predominantly French speaking, with the exception of the South West and North West provinces. Kumbo, the Diocese which this parish has supported since the visit of Ephraim and Theresia Lukong here in 1995, lies within the North West English speaking province.

The roots of the problem are historical and go back over 100 years when the Continent of Africa was divided into countries by the Europeans. Cameroon was originally known as “The Cameroons” with separate French and English speaking provinces. In 1962 Cameroon became one independent nation but it remained predominantly French speaking with only two English speaking provinces.

For many years the English speaking provinces have felt marginalised and dominated by the French provinces. In late 2016 and the first half of 2017 tensions led to protests and strikes in response to initiatives to try and impose French as the official language throughout the country, particularly within the legal and education systems. Lawyers and teachers went on strike and schools were closed for many months.

In January this year, the Government shut down the Internet in the English speaking provinces. Communication has been difficult as mobile networks have also been affected.

During this time there have been further changes in personnel in the Family Life Apostolate (FLA) and Fr Oliver Ndi the Diocesan Financial Secretary has become a point of contact for us. This year funds raised in the parish total approx. £6,500 which is broadly in line with recent years. We are trying to establish with Fr Oliver the current situation with regard to the opening of the schools.

If you would like to know about the Cameroon Education Fund please contact the Parish Office or look under the Parish Project section on our parish website.

CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE *(Jane Dawson)*

This year the Section has seen many changes and enjoyed many events.

In March, we joined other local churches for the Annual Worldwide Women's Day of Prayer Service. Several members attended the CWL Extraordinary Meeting in Westminster, to discuss and vote on the future of the CWL as a Charitable Incorporated Charity (CIO). Members also took part in our Section Stations of the Cross, praying Mary's Way of the Cross.



We held the CWL Annual Coffee Morning in April, when Eileen Carkett prepared a splendid display of our work throughout the year, including cot blankets and a “Twiddle Muff” for those with dementia. We raised £108 from the cake sale.

The World Union of Catholic Women’s Organisations Prayer Service was part of our May meeting when we discussed future events, both in the parish and CWL. Eileen attempted to teach some members to crochet at our “Knit & Natter” session, whilst enjoying afternoon tea.

To our delight, past member, Peg Wernette, who had returned home to Texas last year, joined us for our River Boat Trip from Runnymede. It was a chilly wet day, but the weather didn’t deter our enjoyment.

Although our annual Cream Tea was held on another wet day, members from other sections and parishioners enjoyed the new venue, the Parish Centre. Funds were raised for the Thames Hospice Care and Section Fund.

We are now looking forward to Sister Christina’s talk on her life with Sisters of the Holy Cross in September and our National AGM, in Derbyshire, in October when the new CWL Constitution and Model Rules will be in use. We will also visit the National Arboretum during the weekend.

SHOC, SLOUGH HOMELESS OUR CONCERN (*Ray Waite*)



The aim of SHOC, Slough Homeless - Our Concern, is to enable homeless people to get health support, accommodation and jobs, with the long term aim of ending homelessness in Slough. Our services are needed more than ever with 40 people sleeping rough in Slough. In the period April to June this year we helped 12 people to get accommodation and 6 people to get jobs, so we are making a difference. Each day 40-50 people attend at our Day Centre.

The next six months will be very challenging for SHOC because our current day centre in Serena Hall is in the middle of Slough’s redevelopment area and we have to relocate. We will be moving to St Michael’s Church Hall in Whitby Road in September. We hope to avoid any major disruption to our service but it will put a strain on our resources and finance.

SHOC is very grateful for the support that we have received from St Joseph’s Parish over the years. We continue to rely on the help of volunteers. Teams from local churches and other organisations prepare and serve lunches at the day centre and other volunteers help with fundraising. If any parishioners from St Joseph’s would like to contribute in this way, please contact Ray Waite on 01753 891442 or raybwaite@aol.com.

SHOC's partnership with Trinity Homeless Projects, based in Hillingdon, is working well and our long term aim is still to merge the two charities. The main fundraiser for our partnership is The Big Sleep Out which takes place in Uxbridge on 1st December. It is a great night out - under the stars - with lots of drinks, food and entertainment available. Cardboard boxes are provided. You can experience rough sleeping and raise money for SHOC at the same time. More information available at wearetrinity.org.uk.

FAIRTRADE (*Eileen Carkett*)

Fairtrade is an international movement to provide a better deal for people in developing countries. It works with small scale producers who suffer from unfair tariffs and poor market access. They are given a stable price for their goods and access to training and ways to develop their business. They are also given a small extra premium, which enables them to improve their living conditions.

There have been Traidcraft Sales in the parish since 2009, but we became a Fairtrade Parish in January 2012.



We sell Fairtrade products, produced by Traidcraft, on the first Sunday in the month, after the 9am and 11am Masses. As well as the monthly sales, we support Fairtrade Fortnight. This year I was able to give a presentation to the Youth Club with the assistance of Sister Mary Christa, a member of the Justice and Peace group.

I believe that what we are able to do through Traidcraft and Fairtrade is a practical response to the command to love our neighbour, even though they may live thousands of miles from us.

Thank you for your support.

LIFE (*Sally Taylor*)



Life is unique in the UK. We combine prolife advocacy and education work with nationwide services providing positive alternatives to abortion. We support anyone facing an unexpected pregnancy, pregnancy loss or after abortion. We also strive to inspire and inform the next generation to value all human life from beginning to end.

Life is a national charity with two arms: Pregnancy Matters and Life Matters.

Pregnancy Matters

This helps with all things pregnancy related, and is just one call, click or text away.

- **Unexpected pregnancy?** If you don't know where to turn to, we can give you the space you need to decide what to do next.
- **Pregnant and homeless?** We have a nationwide network of supported housing.
- **Had an abortion?** You can talk to someone who can help you work through your feelings.
- **Pregnancy loss?** We can help you to explore ways of living with your loss.

We also help those who are supporting someone else who is dealing with pregnancy related issues.

Life Matters

Life has been speaking out against abortion and offering a positive alternative to it since 1970. We offer talks which can change lives, many of them in schools. We campaign for a society that shows the utmost respect for all human life. We research and offer a wide range of resources to anyone who asks. Our media team responds to topical items in the news.



www.lifecharity.org.uk

The Life Charity has been undergoing a major restructuring - decentralising as many other charities have similarly been challenged to do. Rather than reporting to a Head Office, our local Chalfont St Peter Life Group will be reporting into the local hub "Life Link 3" based in Hounslow. We are waiting to see what our role will be in this new model. In the meantime, we continue our connection with the two mother and baby houses in Slough.

Our donation this year to the Family Life Apostolate in Cameroon enabled three pregnant mothers in difficult circumstances to choose life rather than go ahead with planned abortions. We have received letters of thanks from these new mums.

Anyone interested please contact Maureen 01494 870396 or Sally 01753 883270.

THE LONDON AND SLOUGH RUN (*Eugene Walsh*)

The London and Slough Run helps the homeless and people in need. For 30 years, the parish of St Joseph's has joined with other Christian Churches in the area to provide food, drink and other sustenance as well as bedding, clothing and basic toiletries to the homeless and people in need on the streets of London and Slough.



Each Monday, our supporters bring wrapped sandwiches, fruit, crisps, cakes and soft drinks to the Priory where they are sorted and packed by a team (The Packers). These are then loaded into our van for a team of volunteers (The Runners) to take to the West End and Slough for distribution. The Runners leave about 8pm every Monday and return about midnight. We are always in need of new volunteers so if anyone interested in helping in any way, please contact the Parish Office for more information. The time required could be as little as a few hours once per month.

In London, we stop near Temple to cater to as many as 100 guests before we move on to Waterloo where we usually have about another 20 guests. No food or drink is ever wasted as any leftovers can then be dropped off at a number of nearby hostels. The reasons for homelessness are complex but the practical assistance we deliver, with a kind word and a friendly face, is always welcome.

In addition to our London Run, we have combined forces with SHOC (Slough Homeless Our Concern) to provide a Night Shelter for those who live on the streets of Slough, just a few miles from our parish. All the major faith groups and many secular organisations in Slough support the initiative. There are many rough sleepers in Slough and the problem is at its worst in over 30 years. Like London, the reasons are complex but we now have over ten venues in and around Slough which are used on a rota basis with a different location used each night to feed and provide shelter for rough sleepers who have been referred by SHOC. As well as the practical day to day support we are also work with individuals to help them get secure accommodation and support their efforts to get off the streets.



The financial highlight of our past year was the donation by a generous parishioner of a new van which now means we can comply with the new London emissions standards as well as having a more efficient and better equipped vehicle. It has been kitted out to meet our specific requirements and should see us through the next several years therefore lifting a large financial burden from our charity.

However, we still need steady, continual funding to keep it running and to maintain our night shelters in Slough.

We remain completely dependent on donations and fundraising to help us meet the needs of our mission to the homeless. In terms of fundraising, we rely heavily on a couple of events each year such as Parish Day, but the next major event is scheduled for 25th November and will be a 'Sleep Out' at St Bernard's School, Slough. Please do look out for news of this event in the newsletter and if you cannot participate please do consider sponsoring someone who does. From time to time we also have specific appeals such as sleeping bags and bedding particularly in winter time and again, we highlight these in the newsletter.

Further detail is available on our own web site thelondonandsloughrun.com

Stephen Forster
Outreach Activity Group Leader

Pastoral

2017 sees the 400th anniversary of the establishment of the first Vincentian Charity. From those modest beginnings in France, Vincentian organisations now span over 140 countries.



Here in our parish, we endeavour to apply the charism of the SVP, which is neatly summed up by the National President who recently wrote:

“The three-fold Vincentian ethos is clear: making ourselves personally available to those suffering poverty, developing our spiritual lives as individuals, and growing together in fellowship, thus empowering us to achieve far more than the sum of our parts.”

These words resonate with our St Joseph’s SVP group but often we need to ponder and ask ourselves:

- How well do we keep reaching out to those in need in our area?
- Do we really recognise and acknowledge poverty in all its forms?
- What else could we do to answer a Vincentian call better?

Each one of us tries to do a little something to alleviate the problems of the disadvantaged and most vulnerable around us whether they are the lonely, the sick, the hungry or the disabled, and thus grow a little more in our own humanity and missionary discipleship.

Amongst 100,000 members across England and Wales our parish SVP group has continued its simple pastoral work with only 7 active members plus the additional involvement of another 15 SVP volunteers who help with transport, principally to Mass, and assist in fundraising and social events. Whilst offering friendship, assistance and support as well as practical help to those we visit in their private, residential or nursing homes, we have kept strict safeguarding policies and procedures and all visiting members hold a DBS certificate.

This past twelve months has probably seen a slight reduction in the scale of our activity within St Joseph’s. This is as a result of seven beneficiaries having passed away, as well as one of our most longstanding and active members, Shirley McCarthy. However, life moves on and we are seeing increasing requests for our services, particularly from the new care homes that have opened in the area such as Woodland Manor and Buckingham House. This has become a recent and ongoing challenge.

Through the whole year we supported over 40 people in our area, some of whom are family groups. Our members conducted around 400 visits at home and additionally provided assistance on a similar number of occasions. There are many examples of the sort of help we have been offering, ranging from taking Communion, accompanying parishioners to Masses, medical appointments, shopping trips and parish events such as the Senior Citizens' Christmas Party, Parish Day, etc, to the provision of food, clothing, some daily appliances, furniture and occasional or emergency financial assistance.

As part of our connection to the local community, we were delighted to start working together with St Joseph's School who came up with the initiative of making Christmas parcels which we distributed to the local needy families and individuals. We were overwhelmed by the generosity of the children, parents and teachers, as much as by the gratitude of the beneficiaries. We look forward to developing this relationship with the school and this possibly becoming a significant event in our calendar in the future. We visited all beneficiaries in the pre-Christmas period and gave the gifts to the most needy.

In the passing year we have grown more in the connection to the wider SVP community, operating as part of a district comprising some 14 SVP parish-based groups and are still twinned with groups in the more disadvantaged areas of India and Grenada.

Other significant activities during the year include:

- Sponsoring two pupils from St Joseph's school to attend a summer activity camp run by the SVP in Essex.
- A Mass with Sacrament of Anointing held in December with refreshments afterwards that was joined by approximately 40 people.
- A visit to a local semi-professional pantomime also in December and attended by twenty-seven beneficiaries and SVP friends.
- A pancake morning on Shrove Tuesday.
- A Summer Garden Party that has become a highlight of each year. This year it was held on 15th July and enjoyed by 55 people. The programme of an afternoon tea and entertainment from the 9am Children's Choir with bingo and a quiz works very well. The event ends in time also for those who wish to attend the 5:30 Mass.

These have been the little ways in which we have been able to provide emotional, spiritual and practical support in this past year.

Cardinal Vincent Nichols in an interview in the Catholic Times in March said:
"I treasure the SVP because they have a Vincentian tradition that is strong in its identification with Christ, seeing the person of Christ our Blessed Lord in the face of the person of the poor. And if you think you are serving your Lord in the poor then you are on your toes. You want to do it very well, and I think that's what SVP members seek to do."

The gift of service to St Vincent the Paul is very specific. It is to *"Welcome the Stranger"*. This year's theme reminds us again that we are all continually called to reach out to the poor and disadvantaged in all senses around us.

Following words of the prison chaplain Monsignor Malachy Keegan *"what good we could do...just being alongside and letting God do the rest"*, we are asked to assist those who are struggling, in difficulty and neglected around us.



As every year, we keep hoping for more people to answer this Vincentian call, and who believe that through their own involvement, no matter how great or small, they too can make a difference here in our own parish and local community.

***"Love not in words but in deeds.
You pray for the hungry then feed them.
That's how the prayer works."
Pope Francis***

Kasia Misiewicz
Pastoral Activity Group Leader

Social

TEA IN THE POT (*Nan Jacobson*)

Tea in the Pot is open from 8:20am until 10:30am. Parents, after dropping their children at school, enjoy a chat with other parents in friendly surroundings while the toddlers play safely. Other members of the parish frequently drop in to enjoy the company. It is also a venue for meetings of various class parents and class representatives. Often it is a hive of activity where preparations for various school events take place. New parents are always welcome and are pleased to discuss any queries with other mothers.



REFRESHMENTS AFTER 11AM MASS (*Evelyn & Stephen Broniarski*)

Parishioners enjoy and appreciate the refreshments served in the Committee Room, although there has been a discussion to move to the Parish Centre as they are dissatisfied with the acoustics in the Committee Room. However, wheelchair access to the Parish Centre would be a problem so discussions continue. The volunteers also put in a request for a small dishwasher to be installed in the Committee Room. New volunteers would be welcome to serve the tea and coffee.

REFRESHMENTS AFTER 9AM MASS (*Di Waite*)

Not only do the parishioners enjoy the friendly atmosphere in the Parish Centre after 9am Mass, but members of various committees take the opportunity to have "ad hoc" meetings and discuss various topics.

EVENTS TEAM (*Vacancy*)

As yet there is no Events Team to organise parish events, however parishioners have organised a diversity of events which were successful and enjoyed by those who attended. There are events planned for the future and more details will be made available in due course - keep an eye on the newsletter and website.



Quiz Night on Saturday, 21st October

Race Night (with a difference!) on Saturday, 11th November

Parish Christmas Lunch on Sunday, 10th December

Nan Jacobson
Social Activity Group Leader

Youth

We would like to thank Isabel Fawcett for all her hard work and support over the last year as St Joseph's Youth Coordinator. Isabel is moving on to a new opportunity with the Emmanuel Community to help to establish a new Emmanuel School of Mission (ESM) in New York City. The ESM offers new evangelisation formation to young men and women between 18-30 years old in the Catholic Faith. Isabel joined St Joseph's after finishing a time of formation with the Emmanuel Community in Rome. We wish Isabel success in her new and exciting venture. Isabel's legacy is the establishment of the Youth Group who meet Sunday evenings during term.

YOUTH GROUP



Youth Group meets on Sunday evenings during term time and starts after the 5:30pm Mass from at about 6:30pm until 8pm. There are a dozen regular participants aged between 11-14. There has been wonderful support from a couple of 16 year olds who help with the fun and run the games. There has been great help each week from

parent volunteers who provide snacks and drinks so that the group can all eat together. This enables them to have time to chat and think about different topics or issues. The group sessions have included watching films and session on Fair Trade. Youth Group is open to all and watch out for the notices in the Newsletter and come along and give it a try.

CONFIRMATION

On 21st May Bishop Peter celebrated two masses for the Pastoral Area Confirmation here at St Joseph's. 35 from St Joseph's received the Sacrament of Confirmation at the first mass and then 46 candidates from St Aidan's, St Columba's and Our Lady's at the second. Clergy from the various parishes were present and the choir who sang at both masses was also made up of parishioners from across the Pastoral Area. It was an extremely joyful occasion.

Our St Joseph's confirmation candidates have been involved in various service activities accumulating in 350 hours of supporting the parish. This included serving afternoon tea at the Senior Citizen's Christmas Party, Advent Fayre at St Joseph's School putting thousands of sweets in bags for the sweet tombola stall, Advent workshop, part of the Church cleaning rota and even gardening with Fr Michael.



FLAME

We took a group of 24 Confirmandi to attend FLAME 2017 in Wembley. Our candidates were impressed by the music led by Matt Redman and seeing the Wembley arena filled with 10,000 young Catholics with their phones lit up or doing a massive Mexican wave! As one of our helpers said, *“even if they didn’t pay attention for the whole time it must have opened them up to possibilities of a wider church perspective.”*

CHURCHES & SCHOOLS

We have continued to support St Michael’s at High Wycombe and collaborated with various youth initiatives with churches in Gerrards Cross and Chalfont St Peter and diocesan youth activities with NYMO (Northampton Youth Ministry Organisation).

CHILDREN’S LITURGY

Children's Liturgy takes place during term times and all children and young people are invited to come out after the opening hymn until the end of the Intercessory Prayers. Children are invited to gather in 5 different age groups away from the congregation. Here they share the Gospel, after which the reading is explained to them at a level appropriate to their age. After the reading, they have the opportunity to ask questions and explore the Word at a deeper level. The younger groups take part in a mix of activities - colouring, puzzles, songs etc to bring the story to life, whilst the older groups are helped to think about the real meaning of the reading and how they can relate it to their lives. When the discussions and activities are finished, the children return to resume the Liturgy with the rest of the congregation, with the Years 3/4 helping take up the Offertory and the younger groups gathering on the altar to show what they have been doing.

Children's Liturgy is open to all, with groups split as follows:

- **Pre-school and Reception** - First Committee room
- **School Years 1 and 2** - Library room
- **Years 3 and 4** - Left hand side sofa room
- **Years 5 and 6** - Right hand side sofa room
- **Years 7 upwards** - Youth room

We have had a busy year and have introduced some new events. Traditionally we have always held an Advent Workshop for children but this year has seen our group helping support a massive expansion to include Welcome Back to the School Year and Pentecost Workshops, inspired by Michaela and Draz. Following their departure Children’s Liturgy will take on full responsibility for keeping these going. They are designed to celebrate special times of the year and have families share some time together whilst getting to know others in the parish.

Given the popularity of these events it was decided to offer an Easter Workshop. Capped at 40 children this event surprised us all by being massively oversubscribed. The day was wonderful with children taking part in a variety of craft activities - making an Easter garden, decorating an egg, Easter cookies, painting mugs and creating an Easter paper plate before taking part in an egg hunt and egg rolling competition.



Children's Liturgy Advent Workshop 2016

Children's Liturgy also supported parish fundraising by holding a Pamper Evening. It was a great success and hopefully will inspire other groups in the parish to take on the task of organising an event for the parish.

We hope to continue with these and more events through the year to make St Josephs a really welcoming and friendly place for families both young and old.

ALTAR SERVERS



During the past year we had four new altar servers who joined the ranks, two servers received their bronze medals for continued service and experience for over two years and 8 servers received their crosses for completing their first year of service. We are looking forward to a new intake in the new year. We currently have 25 active servers and would love to expand the coverage of serving in the coming year. We thank the parents for their support in enabling their children to serve.

PARISH FIRST COMMUNION

Thank you to Celia Tobin with support from John who helped with the formation of 29 children made their communion in May.



Parish First Holy Communion 2017

Paul Rayner
Youth Activity Group Leader

Mass Representatives

We are dependent on Mass Representatives to help create the right welcoming, inclusive ambience in our churches and parish and to ensure that everyone participates in the celebrations of the services as they wish. The Mass Representative is sometimes the only person that members of the congregation connect with as they attend services.

The main duties of the post are:

- To be available to Mass attendees before and after Mass
- To greet the people arriving and distribute Hymn Books, Newsletters, etc
- To identify and give a special welcome to new congregation members including providing information about the parish
- To be responsible for undertaking reading out notices and making Announcements as required
- To act as a conduit between Mass attendees and the Clergy
- To be aware of what is happening in the parish and share information with Mass attendees

We are fortunate that our current Mass Representatives have been with us at St Josephs a number of years and have great experience and knowledge as well as possessing the necessary attributes that are required of a Mass Representative. Our current representatives are:

Chalfont St Peter, Saturday 5:30pm Vigil Mass	Doreen Pooley
Chalfont St Peter, Sunday 7:45am Mass	Des Francis
Chalfont St Peter, Sunday 9am Mass	John Moroz
Chalfont St Peter, Sunday 11am Mass	Chris Gaskill
Chalfont St Peter, Sunday 5:30pm Mass	Mary Forsyth
Denham, Sunday 9:30am Mass	Phyllis Smith
Iver Heath, Saturday 4:30pm/Sunday 9am Mass	Ann Saunders

If you have 15 minutes or so every couple of weeks and could help out with “welcoming” then please see your Mass Representative and volunteer your services. Your help will be much appreciated.

Doreen Pooley
Mass Representatives



St Joseph's Priory
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Diocese of Northampton
Registered Charity Number 234091

Parish Office
Open from 9:30am to 5:30pm Monday to Friday
(closed for lunch between 1pm-2pm)