



2018 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 purpose of this Annual Report is to provide information to newcomers and update existing parishioners of the diverse activities conducted within the parish.

The groups mentioned exist to aid parish faith development, support St Joseph's Church and serve others within and outside the Church community. Those involved in the running of these groups have generously given of their time for the benefit of others and as part of their service to God.

The Parish Council consists of representatives of these groups and on behalf of the Council and the entire parish I thank all those involved in the parish activities for their commitment and long standing support. A similar message of gratitude is also appropriate to the Carmelite Community which has served St Joseph's for over 100 years and your prayers are requested for their continued dedicated service.

I would encourage newcomers and parishioners to read the contents of this Annual Report as a means of coming to know the parish better. A very brief summary of particular points to 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.

The redecoration of the Church was completed in 2016; however, there still remains an issue with the roof that needs to be rectified which is being actively pursued by the Finance Committee with the Diocese.

For those of you who are not currently involved with parish activities 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 their encouragement and assistance in times of need. May I ask you to reciprocate by praying for our past and present priests and to support them in their ministry.

May God bless you all.

Yours sincerely,

John Bates

Chairman, St Joseph's Parish Council

Carmelite Community



St Joseph's Carmelite Community – Fr Michael, Fr Maurice, Fr Bob and Fr Matt

It's been a relatively quiet year - parish groups doing their stuff with little clanging of symbols. The two courses were well received and satisfactorily attended and it's been pleasing to link with parishioners from our Pastoral Area.



In the wider church the Adoremus conference in Liverpool was remarkable for its inspiration without a return to the lace and pomp mentality. There was a deep sense of focusing on Jesus Christ and “Come, Let Us Adore Him”. Christmas came early for those of us privileged to attend.

Our Parish Delegates attend ADOREMUS in Liverpool

Two weeks earlier the World Meeting of Families in Dublin was a boost and you've only got to hear Fiona Everett's enthusiasm to tap into the ebullience that was there. The sense of the personal holiness of Pope Francis points towards healing times ahead.



**The family is like a factory of hope
- Pope Francis**

World Meeting of Families 2018
Theme 'The Gospel of the Family: Joy for the World'

Fr Michael Spain
Prior & Parish Priest

Finance Committee

YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2018

GENERAL

I am pleased to report that our accounts as at 31st March 2018 showed an operating profit of £46,021. Income, excluding legacies, donations and Together-in-Faith, amounted to £296,510, whilst expenditure was £250,489. A good improvement on the previous year. The Financial Statement is shown at the end of this report.

Thanks are due to parishioners for their continued generosity and whilst these results are encouraging we should not be complacent. Every year, in addition to our regular expenses, there are always calls on our finances for repairs and improvements to property and equipment as well as new projects to enhance the parish.

We should therefore try to review our regular donations to the parish, perhaps once a year, to see if we can afford to increase our support to the church. Gift Aiding remains a very important source of parish income. Tax refunds for the year amounted to £29,345, 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. If you do not currently gift aid your donations it would be greatly appreciated if you would consider doing so. If you need to know how please contact the Parish Office.

EVENTS INCOME

The 200 Club continues to make a valuable contribution towards our general administration costs but we would really like to see an increase in the number of participants as this would mean that the monthly draw would have even more attractive prizes to win. The income from the club is divided equally between prize winners and the parish. Parishioners can join the 200 Club at any time and their number will be included in the draw the month after they join. Please join if you can.

Our Parish Day is always a very enjoyable event and brings in welcome income for the parish. Once again we are indebted to Celia Tobin and Christine Gosling for organising the day and for all the volunteers who help before, on and after the event and all those who donate prizes and sale items.

Unfortunately we have yet to find an Events Co-ordinator who would produce an annual calendar of popular fund-raising events and then look for parish volunteers to organise and run just one of those events. Social events are an important part of parish life and we do want to see a lively and interesting programme of events

during the year. Every event does not necessarily need to be profit making though of course, when it is, it is a welcome bonus. If you think you can help in either coordinating events or would be happy to run an individual event please let us know.

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 £17,950 towards our running costs. A similar amount was distributed to many other good causes during the year. For those not familiar with the market, a good variety of furniture is available each Saturday morning at the market located behind the Cemetery and arrangements can be made to collect and deliver items. 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. New volunteers are always very welcome either for Saturday mornings or an evening during the week for collections.

MAINTENANCE

Maintenance costs this year at £20,638 were similar to last year. The sale of the Infant of Prague Church has been delayed as planning consent for "change of use" was not granted. The Diocese is continuing to press the local planners for residential planning permission prior to arranging for the sale of the site.

CHURCH REFURBISHMENT

There are still some remedial works outstanding in relation to the new church roof. Whilst the Diocese is handling this matter directly with the contractors we continue to be in close contact with Diocese to assist in getting the remaining work completed as soon as possible.

There are still some on-going problems with sound quality in the church. Although the sound absorbing panels that were installed did improve the sound quality somewhat, there is still too much echo from our microphones and we are aware that many parishioners are not happy with the sound quality. We are looking at ways it can be improved.

PROJECTS

- **Chantry Chapel and Our Lady's Altar** - The original marble and mosaics of the Chantry Chapel are in need of professional cleaning and repairs and Our Lady's Altar and mosaics also require specialised cleaning. A survey has been carried out by a Diocese Historian expert on the Chantry Chapel and a quotation has been received for the specialised works involved but a contractor's estimate is still awaited from Diocese.
- **Cemetery Memorial Wall and Gate** - Work on the new cemetery wall will have started by the time this report is read. The new wall will incorporate 114

double vaults for the interment of ashes and there will also be space for 80 memorial plaques. Funding has been provided and the Diocese has approved the project. Vaults and memorial plaques can be purchased by parishioners and forms will be available from the Parish Office.

- **New Side Entrance for the Less-Able** - The new entrance has now been completed for the less able with the installation of a ramp and automatic doors. Parking spaces and a drop off zone for vehicles bringing the less able have now been marked. Improving parking and traffic flow at the church will need to be subject to agreement with our neighbours and the Highway Authority. Discussions have taken place with our neighbours, including the school, and this subject remains work in progress.
- **Parish Centre and Hall** - The parish wide consultation did not result in any majority result for the proposed options which were set out. Any new build would involve a considerable amount of funding (currently not available to us) as well as Diocese approval. The work required to the Chantry and Lady Chapels will have to be given priority so it has been decided that in the meantime we will need to restrict spending on the Parish Centre and Hall to urgent works to keep it in a good state of repair.
- **The Holy Name in Denham** - This needs to have some refurbishment and redecoration work and the committee is currently looking at a list of such works and costing them.

THANKS

I would like to thank all those who generously give their time to the parish and save it countless sums of money. The volunteers who hand deliver parish correspondence, the cleaners who keep our church looking so good and the flower arrangers who adorn the sanctuary with such beautiful arrangements. We are blessed to have so many willing volunteers and pray that others will also feel able to use their talents for the benefit of St Joseph's.

I would like to express my thanks to John Forte who chaired the Finance Committee for many years for all his hard work and dedication to the church. We wish him well in his "second retirement". Also to our treasurer Chris North for all his good work in keeping our financial records over the past three years.

Finally, thanks to all the members of the committee who give up so much of their time to carry out the many tasks they are asked to complete. Thanks also go to Fathers Michael, Bob, Maurice and Matt for their support and spiritual guidance and to Joan Barham, Helena Sullivan and Karen Peters for their patience and good humour despite the numerous calls on their time. They all make St Joseph's such a welcoming place for all our parishioners.

Kevin Murphy

Chairman, St Joseph's Finance Committee

Financial Statement

YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2018

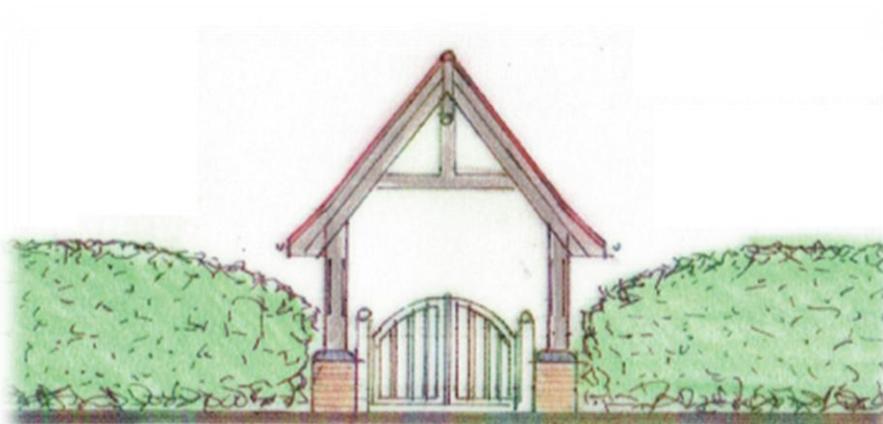
| | <i>Year to March 2018</i> | <i>Year to March 2017</i> |
|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| INCOME | | |
| Offertory Thro'parish | 133,825 | 133,337 |
| Thro' diocese | 50,502 | 51,382 |
| Tax Refunds | <u>29,345</u> | <u>29,654</u> |
| | 213,672 | 214,373 |
| Rental Income | 14,062 | 10,965 |
| Fundraising | 23,795 | 14,755 |
| Furniture Market | 17,950 | 15,500 |
| Events Team | 14,465 | ---- |
| Together in Faith | 2,333 | 12,915 |
| Stole Fees | 8,051 | 5,610 |
| Legacies and Donations | 52,864 | 5,787 |
| Repository | <u>4,515</u> | <u>3,687</u> |
| | <u>138,035</u> | <u>69,219</u> |
| TOTAL INCOME | <u>351,707</u> | <u>283,592</u> |
| EXPENDITURE | | |
| Liturgical | 14,250 | 18,751 |
| Domestic | 327 | 24 |
| Establishment | 53,906 | 58,920 |
| Insurance | 5,098 | 6,693 |
| Office | 5,995 | 5,934 |
| Travel | 374 | 69 |
| Carmelites | 20,000 | 20,000 |
| Personnel | 70,174 | 76,429 |
| Property/Maintenance | 20,638 | 20,882 |
| Fixed Assets | 7,226 | ---- |
| Fundraising Costs | 1,665 | 2,473 |
| Repository | 7,064 | 6,127 |
| Diocese Levy | 33,941 | 33,155 |
| Church Refurbishment | 35,910 | 90,015 |
| NCF/CES/CYS Levies | 2,020 | 1,927 |
| Misc/Donations | 4,667 | ---- |
| Interest | <u>3,144</u> | <u>4,116</u> |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURE | <u>286,399</u> | <u>345,515</u> |
| Surplus/Deficit of Income over Expenditure | <u>65,308</u> | <u>-61,923</u> |
| Surplus/Deficit Net of TIF/Legacy | 46,021 | 9,390 |

| | <i>Year to March 2018</i> | <i>Year to March 2017</i> |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| CAPITAL ACCOUNT | | |
| Balance b/f at 1 April 2016 | -111,529 | -49,606 |
| Surplus/(Defecit) for Year to Date | 65,308 | <u>-61,923</u> |
| | <u>-46,221</u> | <u>-111,529</u> |
| Represented by: | | |
| Cash and Bank | 17,522 | 7,816 |
| Less Accruals re Restricted Receipts | -3,435 | -28,892 |
| Due from/(to) Diocese | -60,308 | <u>-90,453</u> |
| | <u>-46,221</u> | <u>-111,529</u> |



St Joseph's Catholic Cemetery Memorial Wall

Application Forms for Vaults and Plaques
available from the Parish Office.



Safeguarding and Health & Safety

The Finance Committee, on behalf of the Parish Priest, oversees Health & Safety, Safeguarding and the church maintenance and improvement program.

Health & Safety is concerned with the practices and processes in place within the church to ensure the safety and wellbeing of those 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.

Whilst a number of improvements have been made over the years there is still work to be done particularly in relation to the:

- Security for priests and members of staff,
- Facilities for those who are less able,
- General improvements to facilities.

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

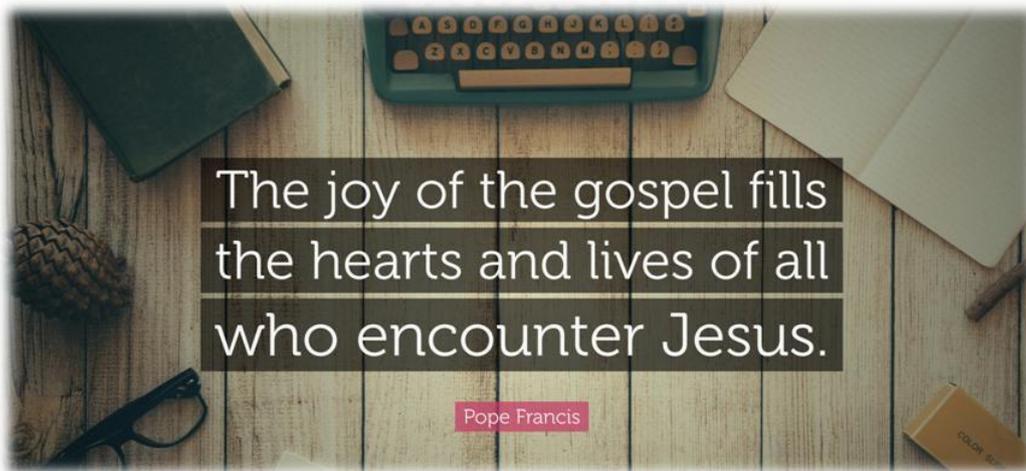
Safeguarding and Health & Safety

OVERFLOW CAR PARKING

We have made arrangements with St Joseph's School to use their grounds for overflow car parking. If St Joseph's Church car park is full when you arrive for Mass please use the facilities at the school – the gates will be open. Please do not park on Priory Road, Priory Way or The Rowans.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Evangelisation



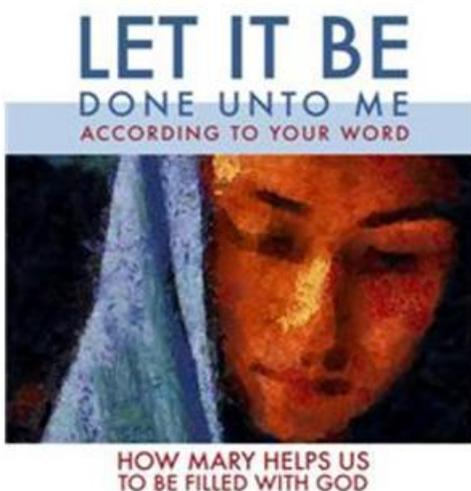
Our group wishes to incorporate our Pope's desire that evangelisation should be part of everything we do as a parish community, and that sometimes there will be events and activities open to all that are specifically evangelistic in their content and presentation.

In the words of Pope Francis in Section 28 of *The Joy of the Gospel*:

"The parish is not an outdated institution, precisely because it possesses great flexibility it can assume quite different contours depending on the openness and missionary creativity of the pastor and the community."

COURSES

Over the past year we offered two courses by Ascension Press to parishioners across the Pastoral Area. Each course ran for both evening and morning sessions. During Lent there was *"The Mass"* which was presented by Dr Edward Sri. This was attended by 65 people. Then in the summer we offered *"Follow Me - Meeting Jesus in The Gospel of John"* which was attended by 36 people. We have noted that the morning sessions are popular.



Listening to requests, we will be offering during October the CaFE Course *"Let It Be"* which presents five sessions with many experts and testimonies.

Then in the new year Fr Matt Blake will be offering a four week course on the Gospel of Matthew, as we enter the liturgical year when our Mass readings focus on this gospel.

This will be followed by a two session presentation on The Sacrament of Reconciliation - Confession - during Lent.

MENS BIBLE AND SUPPER GROUP (*Mike Burton*)

We meet every month for a shared meal, fellowship and a Bible Study discussion of some kind. We are currently following the new CaFE DVD series on Mary “*Let It Be*”. 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 Great Missenden, Uxbridge and Ruislip.

On a practical level we occasionally help the nearby Catholic Worker Farm with manual tasks like setting up marquees for their summer events, and would be keen to help 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.

CHURCHES WORKING TOGETHER (*Fr Michael Spain/Sally Taylor*)

The leaders of each of the local churches in the area meet once a month in the home of Charles Whitehead to pray together for the area and their needs.

On Good Friday there was the annual Walk of Witness from St Peter’s Church in the village to St Joseph’s where The Stations of the Cross took place. Fr Matt Blake gave the reflection.

We were involved in the running of an Alpha Course run at the Breadhouse and this is happening again this autumn.

PRAYER MINISTRY (*Maureen Connell*)

Prayer ministry has been offered throughout the year after the 9am Mass every Sunday. Prayer takes place in the Oratory and all are welcome. The focus is on encouraging people to sense the presence of Jesus and to find His love, forgiveness and healing in whatever situation they find themselves. The couples who pray each week offer welcome, acceptance and confidentiality.

Links have been made with The Christian Healing Mission (CHM) in Hammersmith, who came and led a fruitful day at St Joseph’s in December 2017. CHM provides training and support for prayer ministers and leads retreats and prayer days.

It can be a great encouragement to have other people pray with us.

FOR WHERE TWO OR THREE ARE
GATHERED TOGETHER IN MY NAME
There I am in the midst of them.
MATTHEW 18:20

BAPTISM *(Christine Cornwell)*

During the last year we have run the Baptismal formation sessions five times for parents bringing their child(ren) for Baptism. On each occasion we have had between 7-9 couples for the three sessions.

The sessions have been favourably received by the parents with good feedback. It is so important to us that our young families feel welcomed into our parish community enabling them to reflect on their own faith journey individually and as a family, and also that they can connect with other parents and young children. We are encouraged by the number of families that we see returning to weekly Mass.

The process of formation involves the following roles:

- **Enquiry Meeting** - Parents meet with a priest and a catechist who welcome the family and outline the aims of the formation.
- **Rite of Welcome** - This takes place at the 9am Sunday Mass on the first Sunday of the formation. Parents are invited to renew their own Baptismal promises and are presented with a family bible.
- **Formation Sessions** - Three sessions, each lasting approximately one hour. During this time two catechists lead the session; two take the sibling children separately and do activities with them, which are appropriate to their age. Others provide refreshments.
- **Liturgy Preparation** - Parents are invited to a short evening session where we go through the forthcoming Baptismal celebration and ask them to select appropriate readings for the occasion.
- **Baptismal Celebration** - One or two members of the Baptismal team normally attend each communal baptismal celebration to welcome the parents and their families.



We are currently looking to add some new members to our team, particularly to help with the older children whilst their parents attend the formation sessions. If you would be interested in helping with any phase of the Baptismal formation then please speak to Fr Michael or one of our Baptismal Co-ordinators.

I am very grateful to our priests for their encouragement and support and to the members of the team who have been so faithful and committed to this ministry over the last five years, and I would like to thank them all.

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.

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.

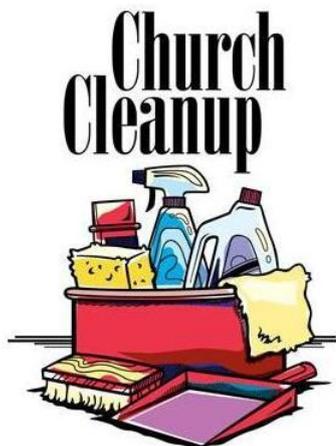
Thank you to all Mass Readers for your faithful service throughout the year, especially at Christmas, Easter and Pentecost and during Holy Days of Obligation.

We had two very interesting and helpful training sessions given by Fr Michael and Francoise Forster in May which the majority of readers were able to attend.

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

A special thank you to the school parents who provided extra help for a very clean and beautifully decorated church for the First Holy Communions. Thank you also to the Confirmation Candidates for your hard work during the service program.

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, Centenary, 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. During the past year we have been 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.



MUSIC (*Joan Barham*)

Music enhances the celebration of the liturgies, and it reflects the readings of the day. Being part of a spirited-filled music ministry offers a unique chance to share talents while supporting and leading the congregation in prayer through music.



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 the Holy Name Choir
Rehearsals as required

11am Louise Langley and Choir
Rehearsals as required

5:30pm Virginie Penney and Music Group
Rehearsals on Mondays from 6pm–7pm in St Joseph's Church

The **Children's Choir** continues to make an enthusiastic and joyful contribution to the 9am Liturgy. The number of musicians has grown and now includes piano, guitar, flute and cajon on a regular basis. Advent was a busy time, with the choir providing lively entertainment at the Senior Citizens Christmas Party and carol singing at a care home. Nearly 50 singers and musicians participated in the Family Christmas Eve Mass. Since then, they have been involved in special celebrations such as Good Friday Children's Stations of the Cross, Easter Sunday, Pentecost, First Holy Communion and the Going Forth Mass. 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. The Christmas Concert in Denham was a great success and enjoyed immensely by everyone who attended. The Christmas Eve Mass, preceded by carols, continues to be a joyful musical celebration. The choir joins together with singers from St Joseph's for special services, with the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Maundy Thursday being a moving choral highlight. It recently took part in a special Songs of Praise style service - "Hymns and Pimms" - to mark St Mary's patronal feast day, combining their talents with those of St Mary's Choir. The musical director is Richard Cottle.

The **11am Choir** provides music for the Mass, led by Louise Langley, a well known local musician and musical director. However, it really needs more singers. Despite our low numbers we are a dedicated group of singers who love to enhance the Mass with the joy of music. New members are warmly welcomed.

The **5:30pm Music Group** plays at Mass every other weekend and is led by Virginie Penney. Thank you and farewell to Alex Ortega who joined in September last year as a singer and is now off to university. A warm welcome to our new singer Shelley Rahman Haley. More singers are needed, especially young people.

EUCHARISTIC 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.

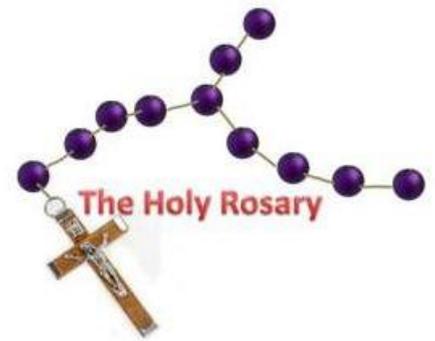


Thank you to all the parishioners who sit with the Blessed Sacrament on Wednesday and Thursday throughout the year. We have regular Adorers who take on one hour slots, but anyone is welcome to come along to pray between 10am and 9pm on a Wednesday and Thursday (except during holiday periods). This is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

ROSARY CIRCLE *(Christine Cornwell)*

The Rosary Circle is a long running group in our parish, now in its 43rd year.

In praying the Rosary “...our heart can embrace in the decades of the Rosary all the events that make up the lives of individuals, families, nations, the Church, and all mankind. Our personal concerns and those of our neighbour, especially those who are closest to us, who are dearest to us. Thus the simple prayer of the Rosary marks the rhythm of human life.” Rosarium Virginis Mariae p2



The Rosary is therefore the perfect prayer to pray communally for the needs and intentions of our parish and the wider world.

“With the Rosary, the Christian people sits at the school of Mary and is led to contemplate the beauty on the face of Christ and to experience the depths of his love. Through the Rosary the faithful receive abundant grace, as though from the very hands of the Mother of the Redeemer.” Rosarium Virginis Mariae p1

We are a small group of approximately 12 members who meet every Tuesday and Friday evening (except during holiday periods) at 7:30 pm in the Oratory (enter via the Sacristy). All are welcome, please come and join us whenever you are free.

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 *(Alex Trillo, Ros Burton, Therese Lawton)*

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 and 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 our church in good order and looking beautiful.



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 Working Groups which are, as the name suggests, all trying in different ways to reach out and help others and all hoping to attract more parishioners to join in that work.

CHALFONT ST PETER LIFE GROUP (*Sally Taylor*)

Life is unique in the UK (www.lifecharity.org.uk), and Chalfont St Peter Life Group was set up in 1974 here at St Joseph's Church.



Recently, Life has been going through a complete re-organisation and we are now part of the local Hub - Life Link Three - which covers a fairly large area containing houses, centres, groups and, it is hoped, a

shop. We are finding our place in this new exciting dynamic alongside the many recently employed young energetic Life team.

Over the past year, through generous local supporters, we have been able to give many donations to the Slough Life Houses where up to 11 mothers and babies live; what the clients don't need is passed on to the Life Charity Shops. We also received a generous legacy from a parishioner who always maintained an interest and supported the group.

We responded to the Catholics Bishops Conference and helped Fr Michael to prepare a Prayer Vigil to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the passing of the Abortion Act in England, Wales and Scotland. It was well attended and everyone was invited to come forward to light a candle, either in memory of the 8.8 million babies lost in the womb to abortion over the last 50 years, or for someone who was struggling with a difficult and unsupported pregnancy at this time. Two members also helped their priest at St Teresa's to organise a Prayer Vigil there, which was also well supported.

In November, along with other Life Groups throughout the country, we created a Baby and Child Loss Prayer area where people could remember and pray for the all too brief lives of babies which did not live to birth or beyond infancy. We continue to support the Family Life Apostolate in Kumbo, Cameroon with an annual donation of £500 which helps support pregnant mothers in difficult circumstances.

We meet once every two months and anyone who may be interested in helping with their time, skills, etc please get in touch through the Parish Office.

"Only respect for life can be the foundation and guarantee of the most precious and essential goods of society, such as democracy and peace."

Extract from *Evangelium Vitae* by Pope John Paul II

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 before midnight. We are now urgently in need of new volunteers to go up with the van in the weekly run so if anyone is 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.



We also fund and operate a Winter Night Shelter in Slough. Last winter, the shelter was open for 94 consecutive nights to the 1st April 2018 and was used by 49 guests, 22 of whom went on to find accommodation; of these, many have since found employment.

To fund our ongoing operations (principally our van and the Winter Night Shelter) we run a major fundraising event. This is our annual "Sleepout" which will take place this year on Saturday, 24th November at St Bernard's School, Slough. We remain completely dependent on donations and fundraising to help us meet the needs of our mission.



The London and Slough Run website has been recently updated. Go to www.thelondonandsloughrun.com for more details and our latest news.

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

Who We Are - Slough and the surrounding area is a region badly affected by homelessness and social exclusion. It is an urban area of extremes and great diversity. While the town itself is home to a large number of successful international companies, around 15% of Slough's residents live in communities that are among the 20% most deprived income areas in the country. There are about 60 rough sleepers in Slough today.

Our Mission - SHOC is a day centre that exists to provide care for the homeless in Slough and those at risk of becoming so. It is the only centre within a 20-mile radius that offers the homeless both crisis care and long term transformational help towards independence.

Our History - We began work in 1997 and have helped over a thousand people since we began. Our focused and dedicated work has been recognised by awards of Slough Mayor's Charity of the Year 2011 and a Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in 2012.

Our Services - The homeless and vulnerable people who come to our Day Centre are our guests. At our day centre our guests can have a shower and change of clothes and enjoy a good breakfast and lunch. We can then talk to them about their individual situation, help them to address their health needs, help them to get accommodation, help them with their finances and how to get a job. These services help to raise their self-esteem and put them on the path to independent living.



The Past Year - Last year was very difficult for SHOC. At the end of September we had to move out of our long term home at Serena Hall because it was in the middle of Slough's redevelopment area. St Michael's Church kindly allowed us to use their small church hall for nine months and we successfully maintained our service there. In May, Harry and Meghan's

wedding created a lot of publicity about homeless people in Windsor and Slough and as a result Jeremy Corbyn came to Slough and visited SHOC. He spoke to our guests and pledged his support for our work. The resulting publicity helped us to secure a new home for SHOC. Our day centre now operates from the lovely Slough and Windsor Quaker Meeting House where we have excellent facilities and we welcome about 30 guests every day. In the last year we had 200 guests at our Day

Centre, we served 21,000 meals, helped 162 people to get treatment for their health issues and helped 41 people to get accommodation.

Supported and Emergency Housing - SHOC works in close partnership with Trinity Homeless Projects, the largest supplier of supported and emergency housing in Hillingdon. SHOC and Trinity are now working with Slough Borough Council to provide those same essential services in Slough. That will be a major step towards reducing homelessness in Slough.

Support from the Parish - SHOC is very grateful for the support that we have received from St Joseph's Parish over the years. We continue to rely on donations and fundraising events and 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. It would be great to have a small team from St Joseph's serving lunch occasionally. If any parishioners from St Joseph's would like to contribute in this way, please contact Ray Waite at raybwaite@aol.com or on 01753 891442.

Future Fundraising Events

- The **Big Sleep Out** will take place on Friday, 30th November at the athletics stadium in Uxbridge. This is an opportunity to experience and understand what it is like to have no roof over your head. Cardboard boxes and lots of entertainment and food outlets will be provided. For details please go to our website at www.wearetrinity.org.
- The annual **SHOC Quiz** will take place for teams of 8 on Saturday, 9th February at St Andrew's Church Hall in Stoke Poges. To book a place, please contact Alan Madge at alanmadgeslough@aol.com.
- The annual **SHOC Golf Day** will be held on Friday, 17th May at Burnham Beeches Golf Club. To register your interest, please contact Ray Waite at raybwaite@aol.com.

TRAIDCRAFT (*Eileen Carkett*)



Fairtrade is an international movement to provide a better deal for the 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.

Fairtrade goods are widely available from all good supermarkets. The producers are subject to rigorous auditing to ensure that decent standards are maintained. Fairtrade goods can easily be identified as they all carry the Fairtrade logo.

Traidcraft is a UK-based Fairtrade organisation and was set up as a faith organisation in August 1979. Traidcraft aims to tackle poverty by creating a market for fair trade producers and to show the commercial viability of the fair trade model. Traidcraft plc is its trading company and is one of the leading dedicated fair trade companies in the UK and globally. It sources the UK's widest range of fair trade foods, beverages, household cleaning, charcoal and rubber products, as well as fair trade crafts and clothing, from fair trade suppliers in more than 30 developing countries. There is a great deal more information on the Traidcraft web site at www.traidcraft.co.uk.



There have been Traidcraft Sales in the Parish since 2009. 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. We also support Fairtrade Fortnight.

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.

CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE, GERRARDS CROSS SECTION (*Jane Dawson*)

This year, we've organised visits instead of holding some meetings in the Priory. Friends joined us for our annual visit to a garden centre, as well as a picnic in a parishioner's beautiful garden. Our visit to Hughenden Manor was postponed due to the hot weather.

All CWL Sections will be fundraising for our National President's project, helping support a Syrian Family in their new home in the UK, for a year. Nationally, we hope to be able to support two families, costing £9,000 per year. This project is managed by CARITAS.

The Annual National Coffee Morning was well supported by parishioners. Eileen Carkett prepared a double notice board showing our work.

We held the annual World Union of Catholic Women's Organisations Prayer Service during our meeting in May. This year it was written by women from Australia, Lebanon and the Philippines.

Our annual Cream Tea, in aid of the Thames Hospice and CWL Funds, was held in August in the Parish Centre, we were pleased that so many parishioners attended. Our star baker, Doreen Pooley, offered a wonderful selection of cakes enjoyed by all visitors. The special guest, Dr Trish Fern and her husband Tony, drew the raffle and enjoyed meeting friends.



The Mass for the Catholic Women's League was held on 1st September, in honour of our Patron Saint, Margaret Clitherow.

The Northampton Branch meeting was held in the First Committee Room in September and was attended by members from Aylesbury and Burnham.



Four of our members will attend the CWL National Annual General Meeting, in Derbyshire, in October.

We look forward to next year when we will join CWL members nationwide, in York, for the National President's Mass.

Three of our members have responsibilities outside the Section; Doreen Pooley is a Trustee of the CWL and Jane Dawson is Chairman of the CWL Relief and Refugee Committee. Eileen Carkett has completed six and a half years as Northampton Diocesan Branch Treasurer, and will stand down but remain as Section Treasurer.

JUSTICE AND PEACE *(Sister Mary Christa)*

Once again the J&P Group promoted fair trade goods during FairTrade Fortnight. An innovation this year was a large banner displayed on the side of the church during the fortnight.



Some seven years ago the Parish Council, with the support of the then parish priest, decided to apply to CAFOD for the parish to be given the status of a Fair Trade Parish. This was agreed by CAFOD in January 2012. The obligations are that, at parish functions such as refreshments after Mass, only fair trade tea and coffee will be served. Otherwise we are expected to promote fair trade goods and that is that. Sadly one or two parishioners seem to have felt that they were being dictated to. They objected to this and decided to ignore the decision taken. It was asserted that we would be complying with the conditions laid down by CAFOD if fair trade tea and coffee were offered alongside non-fair trade tea and coffee. CAFOD was asked for a ruling on this and they made it quite clear that only fair trade goods are to be offered.

The Parish Council and Fr Michael then reconfirmed the original decision. At their meeting they sampled some of the many varieties of fair trade teas available either through Traidcraft or in supermarkets. One might have hoped that this would have been an end to the matter but incredibly one or two parishioners persist in serving non-fair trade tea and coffee after Mass. The J&P Group has no standing to enforce decisions made by the Parish Council and Fr Michael. In the circumstances they are doing all that they can do by referring it back to the Parish Council who have a straight choice. As a parish we either retain fair trade status by serving only fair trade tea and coffee after Mass or we surrender our fair trade status; to do otherwise would be dishonest.



Other aspects of the parish's support for CAFOD have been more fruitful.

Lenten Family Fast Day raised some £3,353 through the second collection and some £700 through the soup lunch; particularly pleasing was that over 50% had been Gift Aided.

The total for Harvest 2017 and Lent 2018 was a magnificent £6,432 which will enable CAFOD partners to work with people and communities across the world where the need is greatest. Many thanks to Nan Jacobson for organising the CAFOD soup lunches.

PRAY FOR PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

Please join us in praying for our neighbours who are forced to flee their homes.

Parishioners from St Joseph's joined the Pastoral Area CAFOD "Share the Journey Walk" in August to show solidarity with people on the move. Together, CAFOD supporters in England and Wales completed 4 laps of 24,900 miles - the distance around the whole world. CAFOD will use this shared journey to deliver a powerful message to world leaders, who meet in September and December 2018, to agree two global agreements on refugees and migration. These agreements must ensure refugees and migrants can live with dignity.

CAFOD supporters in the parish, through the Justice and Peace Group, signed petitions to fight Sainsbury's withdrawal of Fair Trade Tea and whilst Sainsbury's have not yet changed their position, they are very aware of the campaign and know that tens of thousands of people are watching their next move.



Parishioners, in signing the Power To Be Energy Campaign petition, also joined over 30,000 people who spoke up loud and clear to the World Bank and to the UK government - and they are starting to respond. In replies to questions from MPs, former Secretary of State Priti Patel stressed the strong influence the UK government has as a major shareholder at the World Bank. She also emphasised the importance of speaking up for energy spending that benefits the world's poorest

people. In December 2017 the World Bank took a big step to protect the planet and the poorest people by stating it will stop support for oil and gas after 2019. Our voice has been heard!

The Tea and a Chat sessions run by members of the group under the leadership of Margaret Thorn on Thursday afternoons continue to attract a varied attendance and run continuously except for the weeks at Christmas and Easter when the Parish Office is closed. They provide a simple opportunity for parishioners to socialise on an informal basis, quite literally over a cup of tea (or coffee) and a chat.



A just society does not discriminate against those of its less fortunate members who have some form of disability, whether it be physical or mental. Parliament has recognised this in the shape of the Equalities Act. This puts obligations on those providing public services, including St Joseph's, to make provision for those with disabilities. This includes, for example, making access to our facilities open to those with mobility problems whether they be parishioners or not. St Joseph's has started the process of meeting these requirements but still has a long way to go. Progress seems to be dogged by obstacles.

Looking ahead, the group hope that they may be able to get parish support to sponsor a refugee family as asked for by the Pope who has challenged every parish to provide support for one family. This process is at a very early stage but the bare bones of the scheme are that the parish needs to find accommodation, provide practical support, English language tuition and contribute to the set-up costs of £9,000. Other costs are paid by national and local government.



CAMEROON EDUCATION FUND (*Christine Cornwell*)

The Family Life Apostolate (FLA) in the Diocese of Kumbo has recently appointed Sr Mercy Muthoni MSHR to its team. She is now our main contact. At the time of writing this report we have not yet received the annual report on the Cameroon Education Fund.

We hope to have an appeal for the Cameroon Education Fund before Christmas but are first trying to make contact with the FLA and Bishop's House. We are also co-ordinating with Mill Hill Missionaries, who maintain the account in the UK.

This time last year we reported on the difficult situation that the people in the English-speaking provinces were facing. This has not improved. We understand that from October 2016 to June 2017 the schools in that area remained closed because of strikes by teachers and the tensions in the local community. We heard that the schools re-opened briefly before the summer break this year. However, we have recently learnt that the schools did not re-open for this autumn term because the safety of the children could not be guaranteed due to heightened tensions between government military forces and separatists, who are seeking independence for the English provinces. We understand that there have been many fatalities during in the current continuing troubles.



We have contacted Sr Mercy to ask for clarification and to receive a report on the Cameroon Education Fund but so far we have heard nothing. We do not know whether the internet is working to receive or send emails. We are conscious of not wishing to put too much pressure on them in these difficult times.

We ask you to keep the people of the Diocese of Kumbo in your prayers at this difficult time, particularly the orphaned and vulnerable children whom we are committed to support, especially as Pope Francis' prayer intention for September is *"Let us pray that young people in Africa may have access to education and work in their own country."*

Thank you everyone for your continued support over the last 14 years. We will keep you informed if we hear of any further developments.

Stephen Forster
Outreach Activity Group Leader

Pastoral



*Christ
in the
poor
of our
time.*

The poor are at the centre of the Gospel and have always been taken seriously by the SVP's mission since its formation in 1833. We have provided both material assistance and companionship to the deprived, lonely and elderly. We recognise the possibility of social, physical, psychological, spiritual and emotional deprivation that can be as close to us as our neighbour next door.

The Vincentian charism has been present in this parish for almost 40

years. This September's Annual Awareness Month has been themed "*Beyond Boundaries*". Apart from the four named areas highlighted in this campaign we have provided support to 39 local beneficiaries in diverse ways - some of which has involved helping whole families.

PRACTICAL PASTORAL ACTIVITIES

Some examples of this practical support included:

- Arranging for impoverished parishioners to obtain supplies from a local food bank.
- Part-funding, in conjunction with the Lourdes Society, for two parishioners to make a pilgrimage to Lourdes.
- Working with St Joseph's School to distribute hampers collected by the children to those most in need at Christmas.
- Providing clothing, food supplements and items of furniture on some 35 occasions to those in crisis.
- Supplying 50 SVP packs for homeless in Slough.



As stated above, this concept of need and poverty is broader than just financial hardship. A fundamental element of our local work is to visit and where necessary support people of any faith and background who are sick, lonely, housebound, troubled or simply overwhelmed by any form of need. With this purpose in mind our small dedicated team made over 350 visits in the past year, providing company and solace to individuals in dire need of human contact and social interaction. Recognising the existence of loneliness around us and responding to it with sensitivity has become for us a growing challenge.

Arranging a Mass with the Sacrament of Anointing for all who were in need of healing in one form or another was a uniting and consoling experience for us all. In addition bringing Holy Communion to sick beneficiaries has been carried out and will continue.



"I do think that there is a crisis of loneliness especially amongst the elderly...their personal experiences are often being forgotten, left out, omitted, and abandoned. If we really want to tackle this problem we must never forget the role every single person can play. It is a human problem and we all have a part to play in breaking it."
Cardinal Vincent Nichols

NEW SENSITIVITY NEW INITIATIVE

Pope Francis addressing the sensitive issues of human trafficking and the plight of refugees said: *"We are invited to find Christ in them, to lend our voices to their causes, but also to be their friends, to listen to them to speak for them, and embrace the mysterious wisdom which God wishes to share through them."* We have discovered this reality practically on our doorsteps.

CATHOLIC WORKER FARM

As you know we have been helping to raise awareness about the local presence of the Catholic Worker Farm (CWF). Here there was a need to break their social isolation and link them with a wider caring world (St Joseph's Parish) by identifying how we could reach out to their needs.

As we introduced this initiative to the parish it helped provide fruit supplies to the CWF. To further enhance our understanding of what it is CWF do, we were able to facilitate their presentation in May to the parish. Since then we have become more aware and open to their needs. In befriending their hardships the SVP also provided financial help for emergency repairs to their facilities. At summer time we managed to sponsor four places at the SVP summer camp to offer designed, safe, inclusive and caring one-week holidays for children of refugees.

FURTHER ACTIVITIES

Other pastoral activities for the SVP included individual assistance and provision of transportation to Mass, medical appointments, shopping and similar occasions for those who would have great difficulty in getting around otherwise. Lifts were provided on 370 occasions (here I must express great appreciation to the loyal team of drivers providing regular Sunday Mass transport).

There is regular interaction with other SVP groups in neighbouring parishes, sharing experiences and providing continuity of support as people move location. Additionally, through a programme of twinning with other countries, we have linked with groups in Grenada, India and Sudan. Although circumstances are very different there, the same basic needs exist amongst parishioners and are being met in similar ways.

SPIRITUAL RENEWAL

During Lent we participated in a retreat day of recollection for all the conferences within the High Wycombe Area. To be more effective we looked into the challenges of our Vincentian ministry, its spirit and in its outreach to those in need.

At Eastertide St Joseph's SVP hosted a Festival meeting for all Vincentians from the local area, beginning with a reflection followed by Mass. The day also gave us the opportunity to exchange ideas, celebrate our togetherness and renew our spirit. It was agreed that it was a meaningful celebration.

MOVING FORWARD

**We support
people in need
wherever we find them**

Human resourcefulness is a premium in any organisation. This work cannot be done in isolation. Demands have remained but additional strains could be alleviated by either new membership or with more assistance at

some of our events - like the Summer Garden party or outings we were unable to run this past year. It is in moments like these we remember the particular help and dedication of long-standing members such as Margaret Mercer and Shirley McCarthy. As we find ourselves being stretched to meet the services we would like to provide, for example the number of visits and occasions of providing transport were both around 10% less than the previous year. This also we would like to address in the coming year.

However, we remain hopeful in our endeavour to reach out beyond boundaries in finding those who might be forgotten and embrace the needy around us. To help us become more efficient and express our faith in a more creative charitable way we hope and pray that our parish group will attract more volunteers with the Vincentian heart. Together we know we can make a difference. As Pope Francis said *"Those who love do not stay in their armchair, watching, waiting for a better world, but with enthusiasm and simplicity they get up and go."*

On behalf of SVP I would like to express my sincere thanks to the parish for the valued support. Without such connection we wouldn't have been able to financially assist in the many ways that required our attention. With heartfelt gratitude and prayer.

Kasia Misiewicz
Pastoral Activity Group Leader

Social

TEA IN THE POT (*Nan Jacobson*)

Tea in the Pot is the name of the café which is held every Wednesday and Friday during the school term in the Parish Centre. Those who frequent the café are mums who drop their children at St Joseph's School and then come to meet other mums and enjoy the company.

Class meetings are often held in the café and preparations for school events and sales can be accommodated.

The café opens at 8.20am and closes around 10.30am. Toddler, babies and dads are welcome and the 9am Mass parishioners also enjoy the company.

REFRESHMENTS AFTER 9AM MASS (*Di Waite*)

Families and other parishioners enjoy meeting with each other in the pleasant surroundings of the Parish Centre while the children play either outside or with the toys provided.

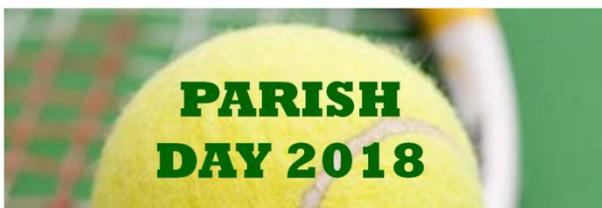
Tea and coffee with biscuits are provided served by a rota of volunteers. New parishioners find it an ideal way to meet other people.

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

Tea and coffee with biscuits are provided served by a rota of volunteers every Sunday in the Committee Room. Parishioners can enjoy the company of their friends and look forward to the chat. New parishioners always feel welcome.

PARISH DAY (*Celia Tobin*)

Parish Day, our annual summer fete, has become one of the highlights of our social calendar. It is held in the Priory grounds and features live music, entertainment, traditional stalls, tombola's, fun and games for children as well as delicious food. The event culminates with the Parish Raffle where the top prize is £500.



It is a time for people to get together and enjoy each other's company for what is always a fun day out for the whole family. It is also a good opportunity for those new to the area to get to know the various activities available in the parish and to meet the volunteers who organise and run them.

Our parish is very blessed with the support we receive both in help for this event and donations.

Nan Jacobson
Social Activity Group Leader

Youth

CONFIRMATION

48 young people were confirmed on 1st July 2018. The Confirmation preparation was organised across the Pastoral Area and was based at St Joseph's. We had a class of 48 Year 9 students and the majority of the Confirmandi came from St Joseph's (St Columba's 6 young people and St Joseph's 42 young people). We followed the "Transformed in Christ" Confirmation course. We covered 16 sessions and each session was based around short times of input, videos, reflections, activities and prayer. There are also short liturgies to complement the sessions.



We had a well-organised group of catechists from across the Pastoral Area, small group facilitators (consisting of parents of the Confirmandi) and other parents supporting for registration and refreshments (ie in total 14 helpers).

The Confirmandi were involved in many service opportunities around the parish such as supporting St Joseph's School Bazaar; Children's Liturgy Advent Workshop; church cleaning, London Run on Sunday evenings and the youth section at Parish day. Overall, the Confirmandi took part in over 400 hours of service.

As part of the preparation, we joined Confirmandi from across the Diocese where hundreds of young people got together for Blaze Retreat, at the Ridgeway Centre, Milton Keynes on Saturday, 28th April 2018. Bishop Peter and NYMO invited Confirmation candidates to come to a day in celebration of, and preparation for, Confirmation. The day complemented our programme. It was great for Confirmandi to have a sense of belonging to the wider church by giving them the chance to mix with other young Catholics journeying towards Confirmation. It also gave a chance for Confirmandi to meet Bishop Peter before the big day and put questions to him. The day concluded a vigil Mass for Sunday.

YOUTH GROUP

Youth Group for Year 6 and above has successfully continued under the stewardship of Paul Rayner and the parents of the youth group members. Youth Group follows a simple format - we come together for fun, offering games from table tennis, badminton, volleyball, rounders, football and snooker/pool to board games and occasionally magic on a Sunday evening. At the end of the session it's suppertime and a light supper with chat ends a good evening. We held a family Treasure Trail around Chalfont St Peter and Fr Michael joined in too.



Our Youth Group went to “Youthfest’18 ” held at Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, Chesham Bois in June. 40 young people - aged 10 to 18 - participated in this free event organised by the parishes of Chesham Bois, Chesham, Gerrards Cross, Great Missenden and Little Chalfont. All parishes competed to win the Youth Cup. The competition included rounders, sack race, tug of war and ‘Penalties against the Priests”. St Joseph’s won the rounders and the ‘Penalties against the Priests’ but missed out on winning the Pastoral Area Youth Cup, beaten by just one point by St Columba’s/Immaculate Heart. A BBQ helped the competitors to keep up their strength and a live band played throughout the three-hour event.

We have continued Youth Group with a small core group of young people and we would like more members. We encourage parents of the new Year 6 to come along with their children and give it go.

ALTAR SERVERS

During the past year we had three new altar servers who joined the ranks, seven servers received their bronze medals for continued service and experience for over two years and five servers received their crosses for completing their first year of service. Two of our servers, Orla Bentley and Joshua Gaskell, have been serving for ten years and will receive their silver medals shortly.



A successful ‘Training & Refresh’ session was held in March which was attended by 14 of our servers. It was an excellent afternoon with help from Fr Michael and Fr Bob and was well supported and received by our servers and their parents. We currently have 22 regular servers and would love to expand the coverage of serving. We are looking forward to a new intake in the new year. Many thanks to the parents for their support in enabling their children to serve.

ST JOSEPH’S SCHOOL FIRST HOLY COMMUNION

The preparation of the children from St Joseph’s School for their First Holy Communion now takes place in the parish not in the school in accordance with the wishes of the Bishop.

The sessions begin with a Belonging Mass during a Sunday 9am Mass and end after the First Communions with a Going Forth Mass again during a 9am Mass on Sunday.

Lessons take place after school in the First Committee Room and forms to join the classes are distributed by the Parish Catechist through the school.

This year 46 children received their First Holy Communion on two Saturdays in June.



ST JOSEPH'S PARISH FIRST HOLY COMMUNION

The sacrament of First Communion is an important tradition for Catholic families and individuals. For Year 3 children and older attending non Catholic schools our First Holy Communion programme takes place on Sunday during the 9am Mass. The children are invited for a blessing by the priest before leaving to learn about Jesus through Bible stories. Their first Sacrament of Reconciliation or Confession is usually made during the Lenten season a few weeks before they receive Jesus for the first time.

Each part of the Eucharist is explained to help to lay the foundations of the children's Christian life. Children are indeed capable of understanding that Jesus is truly present in the Blessed Sacrament, and there is also the grace of the Holy Spirit who helps the children to understand according to their own level. We share the Gospel each week and find out about the meaning of the Word, where in the Bible these readings are found and how the teaching can be used in their everyday lives.



This year 22 children made their First Holy Communion in May celebrating with their families, friends and church community.

CHILDREN'S LITURGY



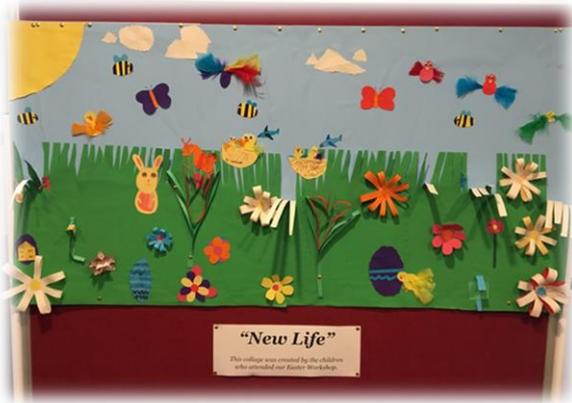
Children's Liturgy takes place during term time at the 9am Mass and all children and young people are invited to come out after the opening hymn until the end of the Intercessory Prayers. Children are invited to gather in five different age groups away from the congregation. Here they will share the Gospel, after which the reading is explained to them at a level appropriate to their age. After the reading, they will have the opportunity to ask questions and explore the Word at a deeper level. The younger groups will 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 office

Children's Liturgy
of the **Word**

We have a Children's Mass every term organised by Nan Jacobson where the children stay in church throughout the mass and get involved in the readings, bidding prayers and songs, for example the Feast of Christ the King.



We have several events throughout the year for the children.

- Two Arts and Crafts Workshops - One held on the first week of Advent and an Easter Workshop held in the holidays.
- Two Family Events - Welcome Back to School in September and Pentecost Sunday in May

They are designed to celebrate special times of the year with games/crafts for the children and refreshments to encourage families to share some time together getting to know others in the parish.



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 Joseph's a really welcoming and friendly place for families both young and old.

We have a really friendly team of about 20 people involved in leading and supporting the weekly sessions. We have two social events during the year (Mass followed by a shared supper) and are always keen to have new people join us.

Kathy Slattery
Youth Activity Group Leader

Mass Representatives

For many parishioners the Mass Representative may be the only personal point of contact with St Joseph's apart from the priest. Making parishioners and visitors feel welcomed to the Mass and being aware of what is going on generally within the parish are key to the success of this role. The main duties are as follows:

- 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 parishioners and members of the congregation at St Josephs for 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
Chalfont St Peter, Sunday 7:45am Mass
Chalfont St Peter, Sunday 9am Mass
Chalfont St Peter, Sunday 11am Mass
Chalfont St Peter, Sunday 5:30pm Mass
Denham, Sunday 9:30am Mass
Iver Heath, Saturday 4:30pm/Sunday 9am Mass

Doreen Pooley
Des Francis
Mary Jones
Chris Gaskill
Mary Forsyth
Phyllis Smith
Ann Saunders

Thank you to John Moroz for his faithful service as 9am Mass Representative for the past five years.

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

"HELP ONE ANOTHER

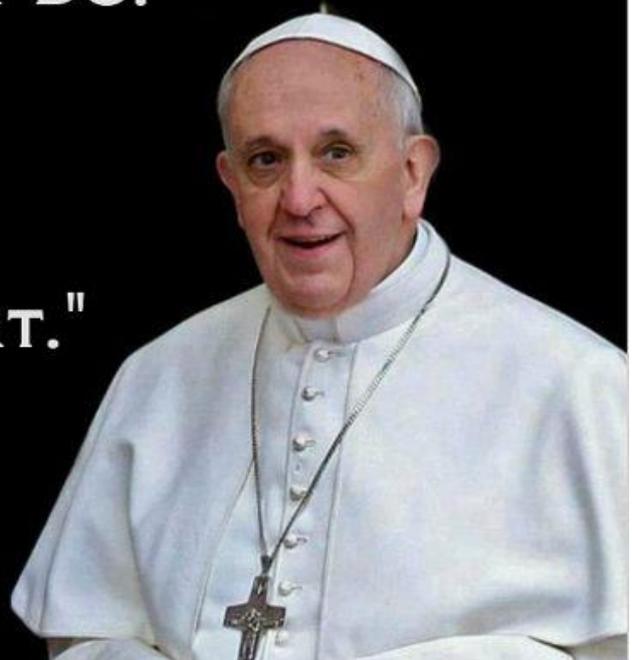
THIS IS WHAT JESUS TEACHES US.

THIS IS WHAT I DO.

AND I DO IT

WITH MY HEART."

- POPE FRANCIS



Parish Web Site

www.stjosephs.org.uk



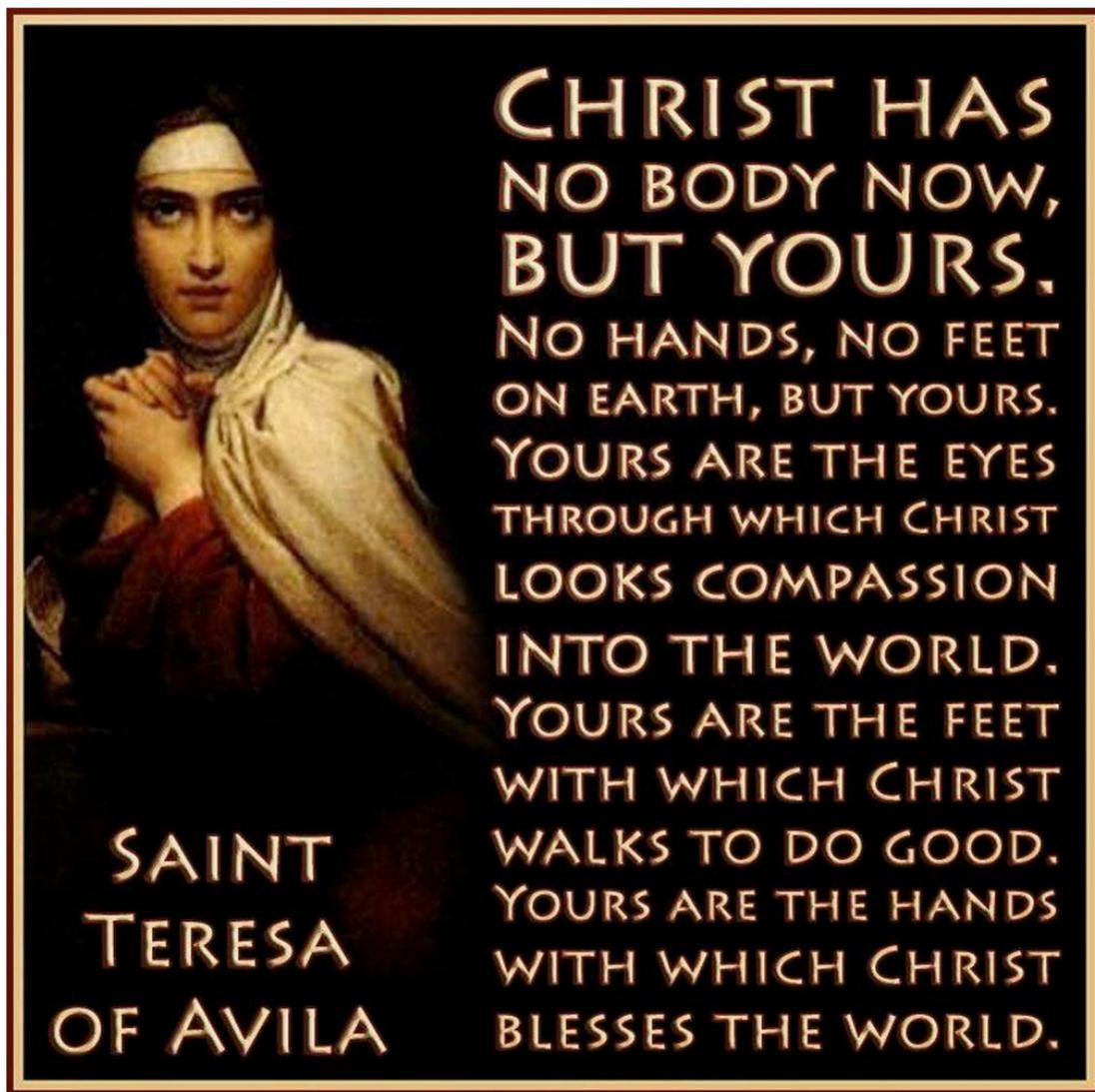
St Joseph's Parish
Chalfont St Peter, Gerrards Cross

[ABOUT US](#) ▾ [SPIRITUAL](#) ▾ [GET INVOLVED](#) ▾ [WHAT'S ON](#) [CONTACT](#) [FIND US](#) [Q](#)



We have completely transformed our parish web site, refreshing both the look and feel as well as the content. The design of the new site makes it more responsive when viewed via tablets or smartphones. The information about who we are and what we do has been updated and now includes a search facility.

We hope it helps you keep up-to-date with news and activities at St Joseph's as well as forthcoming events.



St Joseph's Priory
Austenwood Common, Chalfont St Peter, Gerrards Cross
Buckinghamshire SL9 8RY

01753 886581
www.stjosephs.org.uk
office@stjosephs.org.uk

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)