



# **2020 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.

“The parish is the presence of the Church in a given territory, an environment for hearing God’s word, for growth in the Christian life, for dialogue, proclamation, charitable outreach, worship and celebration. In all its activities the parish encourages and trains its members to be evangelizers. It is a community of communities, a sanctuary where the thirsty come to drink in the midst of their journey, and a centre of constant missionary outreach. We must admit, though, that the call to review and renew our parishes has not yet sufficed to bring them nearer to people, to make them environments of living communion and participation, and to make them completely mission-oriented.”

***Pope Francis***

*Evangelii Gaudium, from paragraph 28*

*Dear Readers,*

The purpose of this booklet is to inform newcomers and parishioners of the diverse activities conducted within the parish which consists of two churches, St Joseph's in Gerrards Cross and The Most Holy Name in Denham, served by the Carmelite Community for over 100 years. We are thankful for their dedicated service and I urge you to keep them in your prayers.

Unfortunately, we have been subject to covid restrictions, which were imposed by the government for our safety, since March this year. This has resulted in restrictions and the closing of both churches for Mass and prayer and the parish centre and hall for social activities and lettings.

Fortunately, we were able to reopen St Joseph's Church for Mass and Private Prayer in July with restrictions on numbers attending due to social distancing.

The result of the covid restrictions has been that the usually vibrant and dedicated groups run by parishioners who willingly give of their time to help others have had to adapt activities and, in some cases, cease temporarily. Representatives of those groups in usual times are members of the Parish Council who meet about four times a year but of course these meetings have been suspended as indeed has the Annual General Meeting of parishioners. Unfortunately, covid has reduced the amount of activities and therefore we do not have detailed group updates in this year's report - it is consequently reduced in content.

Newcomers and parishioners should read the contents of this Annual Report as a means of coming to know the parish better which in normal times is a vibrant and active parish.

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 ministries.

In these difficult and challenging times thanks all those involved in the parish activities for their long-standing commitment and support.

May God bless you all.

Yours sincerely,

*John Bates*

Chairman, St Joseph's Parish Council

# Carmelite Community

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Our report for the last year is surprisingly adventurous. Little did we know that the pre-Christmas news reports from China would change so many lives for ever. In the roller-coaster mix since then we feel grateful to be living and try not to think of lost time.

One of the first church events of the lockdown was the consecration of our new Bishop. Not being able to attend felt a deprivation. Happy to report that in recent weeks Bishop David has been with us twice - first for the Pastoral Area Confirmation and latterly, at short notice, to confirm members of the travelling community from outside our parish. We had managed three or four instruction classes pre-lockdown.

Spring and summer seemed to pass seeing mainly the faces of each other. The normal social life disappeared. Live stream, phones, zoom meetings, messenger app groups, the odd “are ye okay?” calls became the order of the day. The Passion and Resurrection had had humans at the real event and the immediate aftermath. We had no washing of feet or departing in silence or “Happy Easters”, but the communicating mystery somehow prevailed with the ‘distance congregation’ on live stream.

Outside in the Parish Centre a phenomenal work of collecting and sharing food was happening. The normal sandwiches and food were now going to hostels and redesignated hotels housing homeless folks. A major contributor were companies hitherto supplying British Airways and left with wads of food. One particular day, there was 35 tonnes of food stacked there and cars and vans coming from south, west and east to resupply food banks and distribution places. One Methodist minister packed her old avenger and assured me there was no serious bumps on her return route. The car floor was three inches above scraping point.

It was so good to reopen for Mass and Prayer time again. Protective protocols were assiduously studied and applied and we’ve just got around to purchasing a fogger, courtesy of two welcome donations. The sacraments of Baptism, Communion, Confirmation and Marriage are cranking up again, though a few weddings have been put back a year or two. Please God we will have a formal opportunity for Reconciliation during Advent.

An MBE has come the way of a parishioner, Dr Matthew Knight, for developing an app that has enabled swift treatment for thousands. The caring professions have had a major upgrade in appreciation levels. Priests have had an important part of their ministry curtailed with hospital and nursing home restrictions. It’s been tough on folks separated from the hugs of loved ones.

A word of deep gratitude to our St Vincent de Paul members who stayed in touch with so many, consistently caring and supporting those who needed it. It's a relief to see schools being able to teach again.

Please God this Christmas will see folks allowed to gather together to worship God at this traditionally tender time.

*Fr Michael Spain*

Prior & Parish Priest



“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.”

***1 Corinthians 12:4-11***

# Health & Safety and Safeguarding

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The Finance Committee, on behalf of the parish priest, oversees Health & Safety, Safeguarding and the church maintenance and improvement programme.

Health & Safety policy is formulated within the Diocese to provide practices and processes within the parish to ensure the safety and wellbeing of those involved in church activities or who use the 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, The Most Holy Name Church, Parish Centre, Hall, Priory Grounds or who are involved in parish activities.

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 many improvements have been made over the years, Health & Safety and Safeguarding are continual processes which require monitoring to ensure a safe environment.

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*

Health & Safety

*Fr Michael Spain*

Safeguarding (*acting*)

## **SEEKING**

### **New Parish Safeguarding Representative**

A pivotal role in promoting a culture of safeguarding in our parish.

If you have experience in this area, we would be pleased to hear from you.

This is a role which could well be served by two people jointly.

Please get in touch with Fr Michael if you would be interested.

# Finance Committee

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**YEAR ENDED 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2020**

Our accounts to 31st March 2020 show that we broke even on our general operation compared with a surplus of £15,999 in 2019. Offertory receipts were down by some £16,000 but this was compensated by income from Parish Day and the 200 Club. The sale proceeds of the Holy Infant of Prague has given us a capital balance due from Diocese of £301,000. These sale proceeds are currently ring fenced by the Diocesan Trustees and, at the time of writing, are not available for capital projects. This reflects the current severe shortage of income for the whole Diocese caused by the coronavirus epidemic. The Financial Statement is shown at the end of this report.

## **GIFT AID**

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Thanks are again due to parishioners for their continued generosity. The low percentage of donations which are gift aided is still disappointing and it would make a considerable difference to us if the tax already paid by donors could be reclaimed for the Parish. Gift aiding donations increase income 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**

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The 200 Club continues to make a valuable contribution towards our general administration costs. Cathy Vennix has done a wonderful job in increasing the number of participants meaning that prize money and parish income has been increased. It would be so helpful at this time if we could fill the remaining slots. Please join if you can and help Cathy get to 200.

## **THE FURNITURE MARKET**

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The Furniture Market continues to be a reliable and important source of income for the parish. This year the hard-working volunteers who run the market contributed £18,200 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 donated furniture is available each Saturday morning at the market located behind the cemetery and arrangements can be made to collect and deliver items. Our sincere thanks to everyone who works at the market every Saturday morning and who deliver and collect items in the furniture van. If you can spare some time, they are always looking for volunteers either for Saturday mornings or an evening during the week for collections.

## **MAINTENANCE**

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Maintenance costs this year were circa £25,000 up by £5,000 on the previous year.

## CHURCH REFURBISHMENT

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In order to improve the sound quality in the church it was agreed to install acoustic panels on the church ceiling and this work has now been completed. The sound quality will be re-assessed before embarking on any further improvement to the system that may be required but this will have to wait until the church resumes its normal internal set-up, post Covid-19.

## PROJECTS

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- **Cemetery Memorial Wall and Gate** - Vaults and memorial plaques can now be purchased by parishioners and forms are available from the Parish Office. The proposal to replace the existing cemetery gate has been shelved as there are logistical problems regarding adjacent graves to be resolved.
- **Parish Hall and Centre** - During the past 6 months the Parish Centre and Hall have been used for food banks for the homeless and storage for furniture items collected by the furniture market. Following water damage to the ceiling caused by leakage from old pipes, the entire pipework has now been renewed and a new disabled toilet has been installed. The cost of these works has been covered by a grant received from the National Lottery. Redecoration work following the leakage has been completed and is the subject of an insurance claim.
- **The Holy Name in Denham** - The building is in urgent need of external refurbishment and redecoration work and we are currently obtaining estimates.

Various other works have been undertaken during the year, in the main relating to health and safety issues.

## THANKS

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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 to Teresa Evans who has stood down as treasurer, having spent three years managing our parish accounts; we are grateful for her financial expertise and support. Thanks also go to Fathers Michael, Bob, Maurice, John and Matt for their support and spiritual guidance. We are very sorry to lose Fr Matt and wish him every blessing in his new post.

Special thanks to Joan Barham for the many and varied duties she performs with such good humour and for keeping us all informed about everything in the parish. To Malcolm Johnstone for all his work on the Slough Run and to David Bentley who has found time to help Malcolm while at the same time completing various building works. Also, many thanks to Celia Tobin and Mary Forsyth who are currently in the middle of arranging our much-needed autumn raffle.



Grateful thanks to the ladies who continue to arrange the church flowers. Their beautiful displays have been particularly cheering to us during this unusual time and also to the stewards who have given their time to enable some of us to attend Mass.

We are indeed blessed in having so many willing and talented hands. Long may it continue to benefit our parish.

*Kevin Murphy*

Chairman, St Joseph's Finance Committee

**I REJOICED WHEN I HEARD THEM SAY:  
'LET US GO TO GOD'S HOUSE'**

*Psalm 121*

The Carmelite Community welcomes parishioners back to St Joseph's Church for Mass and Private Prayer. We ask you to wear a face covering and follow the measures in place to keep everyone safe. Opening times are listed in the newsletter and on the website.

We cannot open the church to the public for anything without stewards; we need two for weekday Mass and three for Sunday Mass. They are also required for baptisms, weddings and funerals. As the pandemic is set to be with us indefinitely, we would like to expand the team and share the workload. Please contact the Parish Office if you are able and willing to assist.

*Those appointed need to be healthy individuals, under 70, who are not classed as vulnerable or shielding under Covid-19, as per government/diocesan guidelines.*

Going forward we have opted for a digital subscription to the Sunday Message and the children's worksheets Look and Ichthus. These will be emailed to registered parishioners every week, along with the newsletter.

We plan to continue sending a monthly "pack" to registered parishioners who are not online. This helps us to keep in touch with those who cannot access the live stream or church resources via the internet.

We continue to broadcast Masses live from St Joseph's Church in real time via [www.stjosephs.org.uk/Live](http://www.stjosephs.org.uk/Live).

# Financial Statement

YEAR ENDED 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2020

	<i>Year to March 2020</i>	<i>Year to March 2019</i>
<b>INCOME</b>		
Offertory Thro'parish	116,140	132,443
Thro' diocese	49,268	49,755
Tax Refunds	<u>24,469</u>	<u>22,806</u>
	<b>189,877</b>	<b>205,003</b>
Rental Income	15,358	14,506
Fundraising	8,006	19,849
Furniture Market	18,200	14,900
Events Team	15,640	
Together in Faith	58	-783
Stole Fees	4,047	8,074
Legacies and Donations	3,206	4,495
Repository	4,066	2,252
Property Sale	<u>331,269</u>	
	<b><u>399,849</u></b>	<b><u>63,293</u></b>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b><u>589,727</u></b>	<b><u>268,296</u></b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Liturgical	15,911	16,546
Domestic	17	81
Establishment	62,816	62,411
Insurance	5,148	5,327
Office	10,695	5,933
Travel		57
Carmelites	22,000	20,000
Personnel	76,784	74,209
Property/Maintenance	19,501	14,158
Fixed Assets	5,918	5,908
Fundraising Costs	647	851
Repository	3,264	5,650
Diocese Levy	36,307	34,814
Church Refurbishment		
NCF/CES/CYS Levies	2,182	2,306
Misc/Donations	923	2,567
Interest	<u>-3,830</u>	<u>1,479</u>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b><u>258,282</u></b>	<b><u>252,298</u></b>
 Surplus/Deficit of Income over Expenditure	 <b><u>331,444</u></b>	 <b><u>15,999</u></b>

	<i>Year to March 2020</i>	<i>Year to March 2019</i>
<b>CAPITAL ACCOUNT</b>		
Balance b/f at 1 April 2018	-30,222	-46,221
Surplus/(Deficit) for Year to Date	<u>331,444</u>	<u>15,999</u>
	<u><b>301,222</b></u>	<u><b>-30,222</b></u>
Represented by:		
Cash and Bank	1,287	18,955
Less Accruals re Restricted Receipts	877	-1,022
Due from/(to) Diocese	<u>299,058</u>	<u>48,155</u>
	<u><b>301,222</b></u>	<u><b>-30,222</b></u>



## St Joseph's Catholic Cemetery Memorial Wall

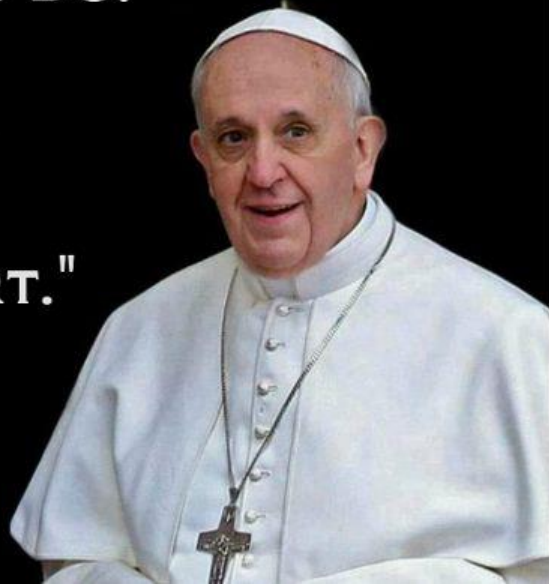
Our Memorial Wall has 114 vaults for the interment of ashes. Each vault offers a resting place for two sets of cremated remains and is sealed with a black granite plaque, with a gold inscription to commemorate the deceased. There are also 80 memorial plaques mounted on the wall, also made of black granite and inscribed in gold. These offer space to commemorate one deceased relative or friend, whether or not they are interred in the cemetery. All vaults and plaques are leased in perpetuity.

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

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

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

**- POPE FRANCIS**



**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)*