

Edition 2

May 2011

Prior to the parish congress on 5th June 2011, here is our second newsletter with an update from the various groups formed during last year's congress. Please do come to the parish congress on the 5th June and share in this meeting as part of the continuing renewal of our parish

Conwy Food Share

In October 2010 someone spoke at masses about Conwy Food Share. Since then parishioners have consistently been donating food every week.

Amongst the many participating Churches, Businesses, Schools and Groups, St Josephs has consistently been by far the biggest donator of food to the Food Share and an invaluable help. Sometimes the food goes out as quick as it comes in.

Recently I have been asked to become Secretary and Trustee of the Food Share. This means I now get referrals for requests for food. These may come from Social Services, charities for homeless people the police etc. We have different types of parcels depending on the need eg parcels for single people, families, boxes for people in bed and breakfast who have no cooking facilities, parcels for people with babies and parcels for people on the streets. Last week alone we delivered 10 parcels across Conwy. We usually deliver the parcels within a few hours of getting the referral.

Last week I delivered my first food parcel. It was for a young lady who was living in a hostel for homeless people. She had had a job but then her job ended. It left her without any money for food. I took her a parcel of food which would last her about a week. It was one of the most humbling things I have ever done. I felt privileged to be able to do this on behalf of the food share and also St Josephs. It made me realise how lucky I am to have access to food whenever I need it. I felt that as I am so fortunate to be blessed with a lovely home and with everything I need, that I have a responsibility to help others who don't even have enough money to buy a loaf of bread regardless of the circumstances that got them into that situation.

At certain times the Food Share gets short on particular items of food in order to make balanced parcels. We will be putting information in St Joseph's weekly bulletins on a regular basis about the types of food we are short of. This way it saves having to buy food from donations.

The Food Share does however still have to buy bread, milk and margarine for each parcel that is delivered so if you are able to give donations of money or food it will be gladly appreciated. You can become a member of Food Share for a minimum annual fee of £5 per person. You will receive a quarterly newsletter and also be helping towards the costs of food. Every penny

donated goes towards buying food.

Here is some feedback from people who have benefited from the Food Share:

"Thanks to all at Foodshare, they helped my partner & I, during a difficult time over the Christmas Holidays and another time."

"A really helpful service, when we needed help over Christmas we were amazed the parcel arrived the same day we asked for help."

"Just moved into my first tenancy and had nothing. Foodshare helped me out on the same day I asked for help. What a brilliant way to reach out to people in need. Thanks so much to Foodshare."

"Foodshare have helped my family several times, especially just before Christmas when we were having a difficult time. They have provided an amazing service, even things like nappies and baby food. We are so thankful to Foodshare, hope it is able to continue to help people in need."

Please continue to be generous with your donations.

By Anne-Marie Furse

Children's Liturgy

The children's liturgy meets at the 9.30 mass to provide Liturgy of the Word for children in meaningful way. The leaders

Edition 2

May 2011

also encourage the children to participate later on in the mass through sharing prayers and their work and bringing up gifts.

The group welcomes families with children and provides friendship and support. If anyone would like to help then please speak to one of the parents.

The Parish Pastoral Council

The Pastoral Council is coming to the end of its first year. Below is a summary of what we have achieved over the last year.

- We have received numerous suggestions and feedback from the Parish which we have actioned and given direct feedback to person concerned.
- We have produced with the communication group this and the first newsletter and distributed to Parishioners.
- We have set up a procedure for making announcements in masses and have received positive feedback on this
- We have helped set up and plan the Congress in June
- We are supporting Fr (along with the finance committee) to plan for the future use of the Parish Centre
- We have representation on the key groups in the Parish or have set up links with these groups in order to aid communication across the Parish
- We put regular entries into the bulletin and on web site

- Someone from the PPC keeps the notice board up to date and ensures it contains Parish information.

- A number of parishioners have attended PPC meetings over the last year to raise issues etc.

- We have representation from the PPC on the Deanery council;

- The Food Share is an ecumenical Christian group that consists of many Churches in Conwy. The PPC coordinates this in St Josephs and we have representation on the board of Trustee of the food share

Communication Group

The communication group has achieved the following over the last year:

- Set up a website. This has got lots of information
- Produced a welcome leaflet for new parishioners which is kept by the side door
- Worked with the Parish Pastoral Council to produce this quarterly newsletter
- Coordinated a paint party for the painting of the community centre

Knights Of St. Columba

Over the last year the main goal we have achieved is to have increased our membership however we would still like to get more members so if you are interested please contact Paul Braid or Jim McColl.

Legion of Mary

Over the last year the Legion of Mary has visited the sick and housebound at home and in hospital. Sr Clare is now the Spiritual Director of the Legion. We would like to get more members on board as many of our current members are elderly.

Altar Servers

Last year there were approximately 3 regular altar servers. There are now 11. At the 9.30 mass there are usually 6 – 7 altar servers and at least one at the 11 am mass. We haven't had any volunteers for the 5.30 pm mass on a Saturday so if anyone is interested please let Fr. know or come along to training on the second Sunday of the month.

Two of our altar servers Dubi Iwobi and Thomas Doody attended a mass at the Cathedral recently and were awarded a bronze medal for the Guild of St Stephen.

Social Committee

The social committee has coordinated many events over the last year which has brought Parishioners' together. The various events such as trip to Christmas markets in Manchester, 10 pin bowling, Family Fun Day, Parish holiday have enabled people of all ages

Edition 2

May 2011

to meet and make friends. A trip to the Lake District and another trip to Manchester is planned.

The Parish Centre

Following its reopening at Easter, everyone will have noticed the big improvement to the Parish centre. Problems remain with water ingress, which might prejudice work done come wintertime. Further work is however under consideration, but at the moment there are problems with the financing of this work.

The Repository

Our repository, near the church entrance, continues to keep our parish and others supplied with Catholic gifts, books, prayer cards and of course a variety of rosaries. Also available are diaries, picture frames, children's books and religious statues. It is the only repository from Holyhead clear to Holywell. People come from as far as Liverpool to buy things. Recently a widowed, non-Catholic mother came to buy rosaries for her four grieving children. Incidentally, proceeds from the repository provide a small, steady income for our parish. Ruth Quinton is the one responsible for the repository. Nearing 80 years old, she is a long-time member of our parish and knows a lot about our parish history, having been involved with so many parish events, baptisms, weddings, etc. through the generations. She also knows about the

sacramental's she sells and is most willing to help anyone learn how to use a rosary or bless your house with holy water. Bridging the space between local needs and universal devotions, Ruth can talk to anyone about things such as pilgrimage, Welsh Saints and Colwyn Bay's Blessed John Williams.

The repository is kept open every day, religiously, from 12:30 to 1PM. Do stop in sometime and get a gift for someone and a prayerful chat for yourself.

The Finance Committee

The finance committee was set up in November 2010. Since then it has been working on three key areas:

1. Increase and sustain collections including the gift aid scheme. The gift aid scheme has now been updated
2. Coordinate the work needed on the church e.g. new gutters and downpipes. We have got quotes on the work needed and are looking at how we can raise money to pay for this urgent work.
3. Advise on the future of the Parish Centre. A subcommittee has been formed which has been looking at the options for future of the Parish Centre.

A Beautiful Happening at St Josephs

Several parishioners work as volunteers at the Arc, a drop-in centre for people with housing and addiction problems.

On Friday 13th a poster appeared on the wall at the Arc announcing an all-day vigil from 9am to 9pm at St Joseph church. It was to pray for a young man named Paul who had suffered 80% burns when a fire broke out in his flat. He was at that moment lying in a hospital bed, his life in the balance.

What was so beautiful was that this vigil was organised and attended by his many friends. They knew that Paul was a Catholic and St Josephs seemed the right place to hold the vigil for their friend. Two of volunteers headed straight for church as soon as we had finished our duties. A small table had been prepared with candles and other symbols.

Many respectful young men and women kept up the vigil all day long. It was obvious that Paul was very much loved. Many of our parishioners who were at Mass that day were witness to this event and were deeply impressed.

To date we have no further news of Paul but lets all remember him in our prayers, along with his many lovely friends. And thanks to Fr Declan for making them welcome.

Oblate Centre of Mission

The Oblate Provincial has recently designated the Parish of St Joseph's Colwyn Bay as an Oblate Centre of Mission. It may be that appointment of an adult faith formation worker and an additional priest to support our Parish Priest may follow this designation. We will be hearing

Edition 2

May 2011

more about the implications of this and how we may become involved in the realisation of this in practical ways in the Parish meeting

Parish Prayer Groups ('Pregos')

Two Ignatian spirituality groups meet each week, a morning and an evening one. All who attend find the hour of prayer and sharing very helpful and encouraging. We gather around a candle with a prayer guide who has been trained at St Beuno's Ignatian Spirituality Centre at Tremerchion.

The hour begins with music and silence, followed by a prayerful reflection on the Scripture readings of the following Sunday's Mass. This is followed by intercessory prayer and the meeting ends with a short formal prayer. It is not a discussion group and an atmosphere of love peace and prayer is always maintained.

The Chigwell Sisters, Old Colwyn

The Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary have long had a close association with Old Colwyn and Colwyn Bay.

In the next Quarterly Newsletter we hope to interview Sr Mary about the Chigwell Sisters and St Augustine's Priory, Old Colwyn

St Joseph's Website

Our Webmaster, John Johnson, has worked long and hard in bringing to the parish a website that strengthens us, our Deanery and our Diocese, but also has

attracted visitors and interest from around the world in the groups and the activities of the Parish of St Joseph's, now proud to have been designated an Oblate Centre of Mission. Please can all groups check the website is maintained up to date with events and other news by informing John Johnson the Webmaster.

Adult Faith Formation Group

We have been going for a year now and a lot has happened. We began with just 3 people and now we are 7, comprising several nationalities; Nigerian, American, Latin American and British.

Our achievements so far:

- 2 parish retreats Nov 10 and March 11
- A parish survey to identify interest in various topics
- A workshop in May called Laity of the Future
- A forthcoming 'Talk' by Jesuit Fr Gerry Hughes on 'The Meaning of Life'. This will be on June 18th from 2-4pm in the parish centre.

For the coming year we hope to be presenting some adult catechesis, more retreats (different style, different venue) and, we hope, further talks on interesting topics by interesting speakers. An introductory session is planned for 17/06/11 for all Parishioners and parents of the children preparing for Confirmation.

We only want to prepare the events that people really want. It will be greatly appreciated if you can continue to help us in making these choices.

A day with Fr Sevlan

Fr Sevlan, a Sri Lankan Oblate from Crewe came to speak about life in the church. He spoke of God's call to every single human being: a call to oneness with God. This is a universal call and is irrespective of one's personal 'vocation' i.e. married, single, priest, brother or sister.

This call to union with God leads to contemplation, i.e. being present to God in love. The more one lives this life of loving contemplation, the more one's heart expands to love others. And so from contemplation comes 'mission', a reaching out from community to a wider community.

St Josephs is now known as a 'centre of mission'. May our mission and contemplation be one so that those 'outside' will find God's love among us.

Library

The library is in constant use which is wonderful. It would be lovely if we could afford to buy some new books. If by any chance anyone would like to donate funds for this excellent purpose please leave a donation with Fr Declan or Sr Joy.

It is much appreciated when books are returned after 2 or 3

Edition 2

May 2011

weeks. A big thank you to all our donators and customers. Let's keep reading!

Church cleaning group

The church cleaning group meets 4 times a year to give the church a good spring clean. Each session lasts about 2 hours.

We are small groups of regular members who are steadfast in our efforts to keep the church as spotless as possible but hope that others will come forward to ease the load and make light work of the work in hand.

Appeals are made on a regular basis but the additional help doesn't seem to be forthcoming so please feel welcome if you can spare the time, even if only for half an hour, it would be a great help.

There is a sheet on the church notice board with the dates in case you forget. They will also be posted below Sunday this week so you can always check by browsing our website page for church cleaning.

We will always welcome new helpers and would love to have some younger folk with us! Cleaning dates for 2011 are on the notice board in porch

Parish Holiday 2011

A coach load of St. Joseph's parishioners set off on Monday 11th April for a five day holiday based in Street, Somerset at the Wessex Hotel. This 3 star hotel offered very pleasant recently refurbished en suite rooms and provided an excellent base for excursions during our stay

The guided tour of Bath was very much enjoyed. Our guide was extremely interesting and brought the beautiful city to life as we toured the city by coach skilfully driven by Stuart around the historic streets and squares. As a child I dreaded the shopping trips to Bath as the large shops in the centre of Bristol had been raised to the ground in the blitz, though on other occasions I enjoyed Bath when we visited friends.

Our free day allowed the bargain hunters to explore the nearby Clarks Village as well as to visit Glastonbury. There were some who climbed the Tor whilst others browsed the interesting shops or supped coffee in the High Street cafes.

On the final trip, we drove up the spectacular Cheddar Gorge, after tasting and enjoying Cave mature Cheddar cheese, to spend some time in Wells. It's difficult to say much about Wells as I am so biased, full of happy childhood memories. My great aunt's shop is now a takeaway. The Cathedral, The Wells themselves and the Bishop's Palace and grounds, wonderful, yes, the food was good too!

Nothing has been said about the evenings. After dinner, we had two evenings of musical entertainment. Brenny was a most charming singer together with DJ Johnny Morgan persuaded us to dance the nights away.

It may have been the end of a lovely holiday, but the short break in Tewkesbury was the finale. A visit to the Abbey left a strong impression on many of

the group as Holy Week was imminent.

Very many thanks to John Williams (organist) in arranging another wonderful St Joseph's bargain holiday, next year see you in Bideford. John is taking bookings now.

By Jane Bowles

Craft/Friendship Group

This group meets on Wednesday afternoons between 2.30 and 4pm in the Parish Centre.

It is primarily a social group and at present there are about 15 members. They are responsible for the decoration of the Church at Christmas and Easter and other special occasions. Part of the activities include knitting hats, mittens and balaclavas for the Apostleship of the Sea and to date they have sent over 400 of these items which are much appreciated by the seamen.

Newcomers are more than welcome and are invited to come along and join the group.

Parish Congress

Remember - please do come to the parish congress on the 5th June and share in this meeting as part of the continuing renewal of our parish.