



NEWSLINK

JUNE 2009

Worship at Saint Faith's



SUNDAYS

10.30am Morning Prayer

11.00am SUNG EUCHARIST and Children's Church

1.00pm Holy Baptism (2nd Sunday)

7.00pm Compline and Benediction (1st Sunday)

WEEKDAYS: HOLY EUCHARIST

10.30am Monday

9.30am Tuesday

10.30am Wednesday (S. Mary's, Waterloo)

9.00am Thursday (Holy Days)

6.30pm Friday

10.30 am Saturday

SACRAMENT OF PENANCE AND RECONCILIATION

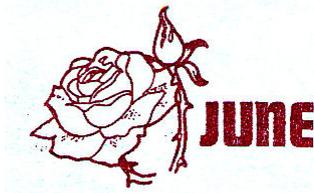
Father Neil is available by appointment to hear confessions or to talk about any matter in confidence. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is always available in preparation for Christmas and Easter and at other advertised times.

ANOINTING OF THE SICK AND DYING

Please contact Fr. Neil at any time, day or night, if someone is ill and requires the ministry of a priest.

HOLY COMMUNION to the sick and housebound and those in hospital

If you, or someone you know, would like a visit from a member of the Church, please contact the Vicarage to arrange this. The Eucharistic Ministers are always happy to bring Holy Communion to the sick and housebound. If you are unable to get to church and would like to receive Holy Communion at home please contact Joyce Green (931 4240). If you or someone you know would like to be visited in hospital please let Fr Neil know. Fr Neil will normally try to take Thursday as his day off.



From the Ministry Team: June 2009

“Love is the keystone in the arch that joins the soul to God.” So wrote Martin Israel in his first book, “Summons to Life”. That definition is spelt out in the most glorious way in St Paul’s “Hymn of Love” in 1 Corinthians, chapter 13. That such a man, with his history of violence and persecution towards Christians, a man who “approved” the stoning of Stephen the martyr, should reach such heights of sensitivity and understanding of the nature of love, is nothing short of miraculous. That such a man could be transformed and become “the chief of the apostles” is a miracle of grace. Paul was so changed, so inwardly renewed, that he was able to touch and handle, with such spiritual delicacy, the concept of divine love as possibly no one else has. If we can follow St. Paul to the heights of his vision of the nature of love, we will draw as near to the heart of God as human beings can. Preacher, prophet, poet, the many facets of Paul come together to proclaim the nature of that love which is divine and which excels all human love.

There is a difficulty over the word “love” in that the English word has to be used to translate four different Greek words. There is first the word *eros* (which is used mainly in the context of human love, “love between the sexes” as William Barclay describes it in his book *New Testament Words*). There is *storge* which means family affection, the love of a people for their monarch, etc. There is *philia*, the love typical of true friendship as in, for example, “the disciple whom Jesus loved” or Jesus’s love for Lazarus. There is, finally and importantly, the word used in the New Testament for Christian love because it is all-embracing: it, involves the whole person. That word is *agape*. It is William Barclay tells us, “a deliberate principle of the mind and a deliberate conquest of the will. It is in part the power to love the unlovable It takes everything to achieve Christian love ... it takes not only the heart, it takes the mind and the will as well.”

It is *agape*, this Christian love, which is the basis of “the eternal triangle” which is at the heart of the gospel, the love that flows first from God, to our neighbour as it does to us, then from our neighbour and us to God, and consequently from us to our neighbour and vice versa. Only when the three points in the triangle are joined up by the love that flows in every direction is God’s will fully expressed and his way made incarnate.

So, “love is of God” John tells us in his first epistle and “God is love.” No wonder the “more excellent way” in the Hymn of love, is, as the New English Bible puts it, “the best way of all”.

With my love and prayers,

Fr. Dennis

Signs of the Times

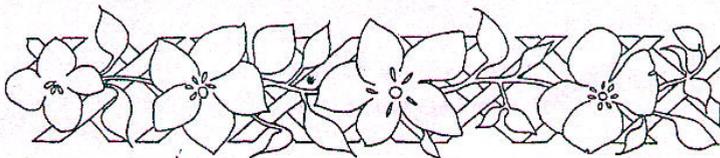
‘The Oldie’ magazine reports:

‘Foreign Office mandarins are embroiled in a row over which religious festivals should be the subject of special greetings from the Foreign Secretary. In the past year, David Miliband has sent out statements to mark Ramadan and the Jewish New Year, but neglected to send Christmas or Easter messages. “We are now consulting with private offices, stakeholder managers and the diversity strategy unit to draw up guidelines that strike the right balance,” says a Foreign Office spokesman.’

Did someone say we were a **Christian** country with an established church, or have I missed something? Our splendid Archbishop of York (as substantial a stakeholder as you could wish to see) would have something to say. He is reported elsewhere (well, yes, it was in the *Daily Telegraph*, squeezed in after all the coverage of politicians’ expenses!) as having ‘scored a remarkable goal’ in publicising the good old C of E. When they play Stevenage in the F.A. Trophy final, they will apparently be playing not in their familiar red and white stripes but in archiepiscopal purple in honour of him.

“I think it’s an absolutely marvellous gesture,” says Dr Sentamu, one of the team’s most prominent supporters. “I’m the noisiest person on the terraces. I know all the phrases: I tell them to open their legs” (!)

‘The Archbishop, who was a fan of Manchester United before his Damascene conversion, says he prays for York City when he feels it is necessary. The somewhat garish-looking shirts will be auctioned in aid of the Archbishop’s Youth Trust.’



The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary to Elizabeth

Sunday 7th June at 10.30 am



Patronal Festival Eucharist

in S. Mary's Waterloo

(no morning service in S. Faith's)

Preacher: Canon Brian Watchorn
(former Dean of Pembroke College, Cambridge)

Followed by BBQ lunch
(tickets now available)

Beryl McWilliam, R.I.P.

All who knew her were saddened at the recent death of Beryl McWilliam, a long-time member of St Faith's. In earlier years she was an active member of the church family, and in particular will be remembered as hostess of one of the Parish Centres, where her hospitality and friendship made her Dorbett Drive house a centre of warmth and fellowship for many years. Fr Peter Goodrich got these centres started, and the editor was leader of Beryl's group, where prayer, discussion, visiting speakers and, of course, food and drink were the order of the day.

Fr Peter conducted her funeral on April 29th, and in her memory read this poem by Christina Rossetti.

Remember me when I am gone away,
Gone far away into the silent land;
When you can no more hold me by the hand,
Nor I half turn to go yet turning stay.
Remember me when no more day by day
You tell me of our future that you planned:
Only remember me, you understand,
It will be too late to counsel then or pray.
Yet if you should forget me for a while
And afterwards remember, do not grieve
For if the darkness and corruption leave
A vestige of the thoughts that once I had,
Better by far you should forget and smile
Than that you should remember and be sad.



May she rest in peace and rise in glory.

The Feast of Corpus Christi

Thursday 19th June

Solemn Mass at 8.00 pm

...followed by a bring-a-bottle party in the vicarage garden.

Preacher: Father Simon Brandes (Vicar of Chiswick, London)

During the service there is an opportunity to thank those who have served as Eucharistic Ministers and to commission those to serve for a new term of office.

Antipodean Adventure

Joan Utley



In the second and final instalment of her New Zealand holiday diary, Joan describes her days in the South Island.

From Wellington we sailed across Cook Strait to the pretty port of Picton and went by train to Christchurch on the Transcenic Railway – a quite spectacular journey. We stopped at the grape-growing area at Blenheim then on through salt lakes and river valleys. Finally we crossed the Canterbury Plains - where of course there were fields of sheep! – and on to Christchurch, often referred to as the Garden City. Lyttleton Harbour is where English settlers arrived by ship in 1850 and established New Zealand's first city.

On the following day we started our tour of the South island by coach. The scenery was spectacular and ever-changing. We crossed the plains to Timaru and on to the lovely city of Dunedin, where Scottish Presbyterian settlers arrived in 1848. Onward the next day to Te Anau, a most beautiful place at the end of the Fiordland. Then on to Milford Sound for a sail through the fiords, again with magnificent and spectacular scenery.

Then it was off again early to Queenstown, another lovely place, but so hilly that we needed a taxi service! We went up in a cable car and the views from the top were beautiful. We faced the Remarkable Mountains and the lake and bungee jumping - not for us! En route back to Christchurch we travelled through the fine rugged landscape of Otago, into Mackenzie Country and on to Mount Cook Village at the base of the highest mountain: Mount Cook, or in Maori Aoraki. We had the opportunity to ride in a helicopter, and flew through the snow-covered mountains to land on the glacier on Mount Cook. It was awesome – beautiful warm sunshine, no wind and ice and snow beneath our feet: the highlight of our stay in the South Island. I can't find words enough to describe the grandeur of God's glory all around us.

Back to reality again at Christchurch and our flight to Singapore – eight and half hours, then just six hours' break and a flight to Manchester lasting thirteen and a half hours! Need I say we had had a wonderful holiday, enjoying almost every minute of it – and slept on and off for three weeks on return!! Before we left in February, Fr Neil gave us a blessing for our journey, and before we left Hamilton Keith gave us a blessing in the Cathedral. What could go wrong on our journeys?

The Lord really looked after us. Alleluia!

Sunday School Party

Sunday 12th June from 3pm – 5pm
in the Vicarage Garden

PICNIC, GAMES,
BOUNCY-CASTLE & LOTS OF FUN!



Two Thank Yous

Just to say a huge big thankyou to Fred Nye, Fr Neil and everyone who organised the Good Friday workshop at St Mary's. We had lots of fun with tissue paper glue and glitter!! We even learnt a lot....

Love from
Eleanor and Grace Evison xx

I would like to thank the members of St Faith's for praying for me during my recent illness. I have great faith in the power of prayer and am sure these prayers have helped me. Now each day is a bonus and it has helped me sort out my priorities!

Once again thank you all most sincerely and I hope to see you before too long.

Joan Fell

Spirit of God: Poetry for Pentecost

Heaven

Fish (fly-replete in depth of June,
Dawdling away their wat'ry noon)
Ponder deep wisdom, dark or clear,
Each secret fishy hope or fear.
Fish say, they have their Stream or Pond;
But is there anything Beyond?
This life cannot be All, they swear,
Or how unpleasant, if it were!
One may not doubt that, somehow, Good
Shall come of Water and of Mud;
And sure, the reverent eye must see
A Purpose in Liquidity.
We darkly know, by Faith we cry,
The future is not Wholly Dry.
Mud unto mud!- Death eddies near—
Not here the appointed End, not here!
But somewhere, beyond Space and Time,
Is wetter water, slimier slime!
And there (they trust) there swimmeth One
Who swam ere rivers were begun,
Immense, of fishy form and mind,
Squamous, omnipotent, and kind;
And under that Almighty Fin,
The little fish may enter in.
Oh! never fly conceals a hook,
Fish say, in the Eternal Brook,
But more than mundane weeds are there,
And mud, celestially fair;
Fat caterpillars drift around,
And Paradisal grubs are found;
Unfading moths, immortal flies,
And the worm that never dies.
And in that Heaven of all their wish,
There shall be no more land, say fish.



Rupert Brooke

Hymns to the Holy Spirit

Jesus, we on the word depend,
Spoken by thee while present here,
“The Father in my name shall send
The Holy Ghost, the Comforter.”

That promise made to Adam’s race,
Now, Lord, in us, even us, fulfill;
And give the Spirit of thy grace,
To teach us all thy perfect will.

That heavenly Teacher of mankind,
That Guide infallible impart,
To bring thy sayings to our mind,
And write them on our faithful heart.

He only can the words apply
Through which we endless life possess,
And deal to each his legacy,
His Lord’s unutterable peace.

That peace of God, that peace of thine,
Oh, might he now to us bring in,
And fill our souls with power divine,
And make an end of fear and sin;

The length and breadth of love reveal,
The height and depth of Deity;
And all the sons of glory seal,
And change, and make us all like thee!

Charles Wesley



Oh fiery Spirit, praise to you
who stirs us with cymbals,
soothes us with the lute!
From you the minds of men catch fire; you know
how to set up the body’s
tent, to house the soul.

From both, the Will ascends: lends the Soul
sapience, to taste the world;
desires, to light it.
Our understandings make
music with you, set up the Spirit's workshop
distilling golden deeds.

The secateurs are in your hand to cut
that apple - full of the black Parasite
who clouds our wills, and poisons
our longings; sets our souls in a flap
wheeling and screaming round, nowhere to settle -
ll the mind, restored, restrains those wills and those desires.

If our spirit is tempted to look
through that evil eye - or talk
with that 'wicked' tongue - you throw it back on the fire;
If our reason is down on the boards, knocked cold
by our own bad deeds, you pound it up even smaller
and brew it up afresh - like a new Creation.

If evil draws a knife
or gun on you, you're faster: down he goes again
who made Heaven itself a penthouse for his pride.

You've made another tower to stand in Heaven
from publicans and sinners - those who daren't
look up, who beat their breasts.

So every creature that takes life from you
praises you - precious ointment
who turns stinking wounds to precious jewels.

Descend to us;
gather us to yourself;
Show us the paths of life. Amen.

Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179)
- translated and adapted



Dancing with the Father

Dancing with the Father
And the Son
In beginning the beginning,
You were there
Spirit of God,
Breath of life
Creator.

Revealing words and wisdom
To prophets and apostles,
To scribes and editors,
You were there
In discernment,
Spirit of God,
Inspirer.

Filling with life and power,
With truth and courage,
Overwhelming with love and praise,
You were there
At Pentecost,
Spirit of God,
Enabler.

Longing to come,
To dance, to reveal,
To fill, to overwhelm,
To create and inspire and enable,
Spirit of God,
You are here
In fullness.

Baptise us.

Daphne Kitching



Celtic Journey to Durham

The increasing attraction of the Celtic saints and the emergence of Celtic Christianity will feature in a **Celtic Pilgrimage** at St Chad's College, Durham in August.

Canon Martin Warner, of St Paul's Cathedral, London, will lead the week-long course which will run from 3rd-10th August and costs £438 (half board) in a university standard room.

Celtic Pilgrimage is open to everyone from this region. Participants register at the Durham College for a week of Christian pilgrimage and teaching focussing on the Celtic saints of Hilda, Aidan, Cuthbert and Cedd.

Those taking part visit Holy Island and Bamburgh as well as taking in Bede's World, Whitby, Lastingham and Durham Cathedral.

"Each day consists of talks, services and many of the day include a trip out to a well know site including a highly memorable pilgrimage to Lindisfarne itself," said Canon Warner this week.

He is an experienced pilgrimage leader and is also Master of the Guardians of the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham in Norfolk.

Brochures are available on 01482 662 721



Ten Glorious Years!

David Jones

On 29 April 1999, Fr Neil was inducted as Vicar of the United Benefice. On Sunday, 3 May 2009, the church hall at St Faith's was packed again to celebrate the tenth anniversary of that day.

The idea to celebrate the anniversary was Fr Neil's and the party in the hall followed a special service of Choral Evensong and May Devotions. As well as members of the congregations from St Faith's and St Mary's, several of Fr Neil's friends and colleagues from the Diocese and beyond had travelled to join in the celebrations. The music and liturgy at Evensong was, as usual, uplifting and we welcomed Fr Michael Wood, Rector of Castleford, as guest preacher.

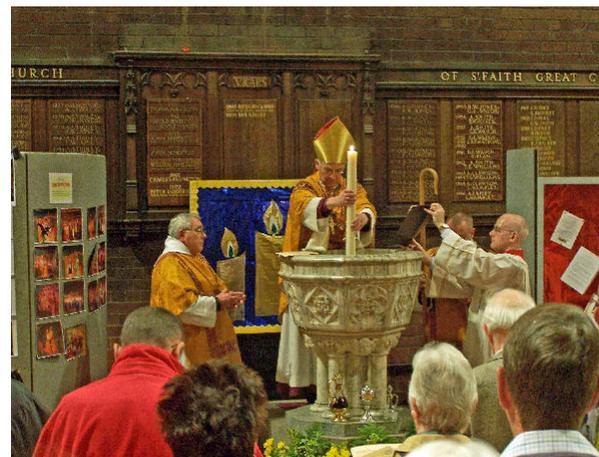
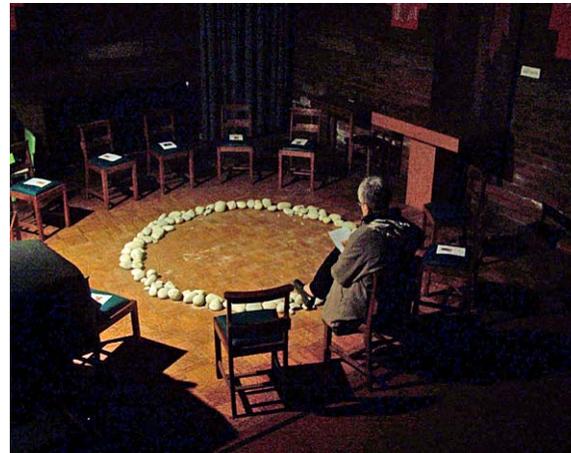
Palm Sunday Parade....

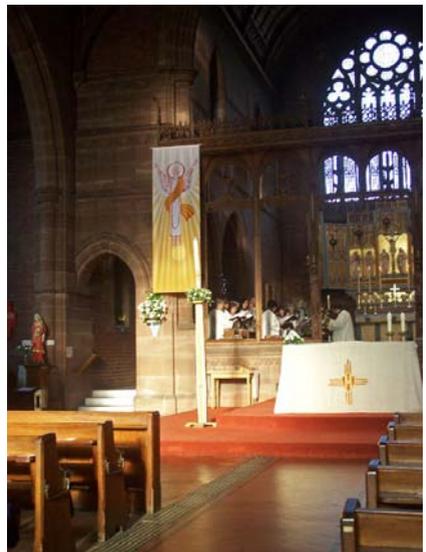
At Merchant Taylors'
School, on the road,
and in church.



Easter Parade

Centre pages: Palm Sunday evening Compline, Maundy Thursday, the Prayer Stations, the Easter Vigil, Bishop David Jennings, the fireworks... and the First Communion children on Easter morning.
Overleaf: more Easter Day morning images, and scenes from Festal Evensong.





Afterwards, the Catering Team had put on a sumptuous buffet in the hall and we had to bring in extra chairs! Kari Dodson, representing St Faith's, and Lynda Dixon, representing St Mary's, presented Fr Neil with vouchers on behalf of the congregations which took him by surprise! He responded with a gracious speech thanking everyone for their support and noting that, even with some ups and downs, it had been ten very happy years.

An evening of first class entertainment followed. The choir had prepared a special psalm in honour of Fr Neil and we were treated to a wide range of songs, dances and monologues from friends and parishioners alike! The funniest moment came when Fr Dennis started singing "South of the Border" and, at the mention of Mexico, everyone sneezed loudly!! Uproar!

It was a lovely evening and a great tribute to Fr Neil's (first!) ten years at St Faith's and St Mary's. Long may he reign!

Question and Answer

Question: The Bishop of Oxford sprinkled holy water on Oxford United's pitch to reverse a supposed curse. How does water become holy?

Answer: My vicar told me that the way he made Holy Water was to take ordinary water and boil the hell out of it.

In a Manner of Speaking

A parson once said to the actor David Garrick, Why is it that I, who speak great truths, deliver them to a half-empty church once a week, while you who speak merely fiction can fill a theatre every night?

Garrick replied, Because you speak truth as though it were fiction; whereas I speak fiction as if it were the truth.





Midsummer Madness

The Crosby Capriol Singers invite you to their next performance, Midsummer Madness, on Saturday 20th June at 7.30 pm at St Michael's Church Hall, at the corner of St Michael's Road and Dowhills Road, Blundellsands. Tickets are £8 (concessions £7, accompanied under 19s, free) including refreshments, and are available in advance from Pritchards Books, choir members, can be booked by ringing 924 2007, or by e-mailing tickets@crosbycapriolsingers.co.uk.

There will be a variety of accompanied and unaccompanied music including "A Sprig of Thyme", an arrangement of British folk music by the ever-popular John Rutter, and many other well-loved pieces, which will be performed in a bistro style setting and the audience will be invited to enjoy the concert with a glass of wine while seated with their friends at small tables. The Singers hope that this more informal style of performance, which has proved successful in the past, will provide a relaxed atmosphere in which to enjoy this popular selection on a warm summer's evening.

Strawberry Tea

Please make a note in your diary for Sunday June 28th when Rosie and Rick are inviting you to their house and garden for a Strawberry Tea at 3.00. As usual, the event will be in aid of the work of the Waterloo Partnership. There will be a raffle (for which prizes would be gratefully received) and the entrance price is £5.00 which will include eats and drinks.

Tickets are available from **Rosie Walker** NOW.



Hope not Hate



Some readers of this article may remember that in 1973, St Faith's Choir went on strike for the first time (and last) for better pay and conditions of service. The 12 year old Head Chorister and leading negotiator called the choristers out one Sunday and together shoulder to shoulder we sat in the main body of the church as opposed to our usual stalls. Press and media coverage were banned (ie no mention of it in the Church Newsletter!) and many thought we were simply on holiday, but we were determined and appalled at the relatively low payments to the choir for Weddings and Funerals in contrast to that of the Choirmaster, we vowed to strike until terms were settled. That young, red-haired soprano was to go on to be a leading trade unionist for local government and is now back asking that all parishioners and church goers unite with all other faith groups and members of our community to keep out the politics of hate from our lives.

The European Elections on June 4th rarely attract much attention and always a low turn out. This year however, is very different as the Leader of the British National Party (BNP), Nick Griffin, is standing to represent the citizens of Sefton and the North West under his racist and fascist BNP banner. A denier of the Holocaust, Griffin, in March this year, described immigration as "bloodless genocide". Griffin has deliberately targeted our area because he only needs as little as 8% of the vote in order to ensure he becomes an MEP representing you and me. Faith groups and Churches are lining up to condemn the BNP: The Rev Ian Bishop, of St Michael and All Angels Church, in Hightown, Middlewich, says many churches are opposed to the BNP manifesto. He said: "In my opinion to vote BNP is to oppose Christian values and the Christian Church. "I have made it abundantly clear that I cannot see how it is possible to call yourself Christian and vote BNP."

The Archbishop of York was recently quoted saying: 'A vote for the BNP is like spitting in the face of God'."

Like many of St Faith's congregation, Sefton is my home: Sefton is a very special place, vibrant, tolerant and friendly. People of different races, cultures, religions and backgrounds have made Sefton their home and contribute to the borough through education, work, enterprise, culture, entertainment and sport.

We oppose those who stand to undermine 'our' Sefton and who aim to divide our community and create intolerance and violence against our neighbours. The track record of the BNP clearly illustrates that wherever they get a foothold, violence and tensions increase massively. In these very challenging and uncertain economic times, the solutions are complex, but do not include any of the policies of the BNP such as creation of social divisions, intolerance, racial violence, banning of mixed marriages, prevention of women working outside of the home and provision for every home to own a gun. Whatever our problems these are not the answer.

The BNP don't really care about how offended over 90% of people are. In these elections they only need 10% of the vote to get several MEPs elected and there are probably 10% of the population who totally agree with Griffin's views on race. Our task is simple, we must all get out and vote on June 4th and avoid the nightmare of waking the next day to be represented by a fascist party.

Whoever you vote for on June 4th, do not force this once half-decent St Faith's choirboy to return and call out all the Clergy and Choir out on indefinite strike action! We won our dispute in 1973, but this time with your help and together, we can all win – please use your vote and oppose the BNP politics of hate. Many thanks.

Hope Not Hate.

Glen Williams

Branch Secretary, Sefton UNISON (former St Faith's Head Chorister)



PCC Away Day

aka "Didn't we have a lovely time the day we went to..... *Formby...?*"

Fr. Neil writes:

It takes real commitment to volunteer for the PCC. It takes even more commitment to give up a Saturday for the PCC – but of course it's all in aid of a good cause!

Our "new" PCC met, with St. Mary's PCC on Saturday 9th May to spend some time considering their leadership and indeed what our vision might be for the coming year.

CHANGED PRIORITIES AHEAD....

This is a slogan we have used for months. What does it mean? What are the priorities and what needs changing. We started with a simple exercise – "What on earth is the Church for?" – and considered 13 possible priorities of the church.

We started with:

The church is here...

To celebrate the presence of Christ in Word and Sacrament

To be a sign of God's forgiveness in a divided world

To draw people together in community

To serve the poor and marginalised in practical and spiritual ways
To challenge the culture of the age
To call sinners to repentance
To speak out against injustice
To provide what is lacking in a community
(eg lunches for the homeless, nursery provision...)
To evangelise and draw people to faith in Christ
To encourage people to live lives of holiness
To provide a place where lives can be changed
To be a powerhouse of prayer
To serve the mission of the church overseas

After much discussion, debate and argument the PCC had to decide upon 4 priorities. This didn't mean that the others weren't important –far from it. But we tried to be realistic and admit that we can't do everything in one go. We might attempt some things this year, and then worry about next year next year. So our four priorities for this year are:

The church is here...

To celebrate the presence of Christ in Word and Sacrament
To be a sign of God's forgiveness in a divided world
To draw people together in community
To evangelise and draw people to faith in Christ

Now... how we do that is on the agenda....! Watch this space!

Before enjoying lunch we had a more detailed session when we discussed what Robert Warren (in his book "The Healthy Churches Handbook") suggested the seven marks of a healthy church might be.

So, we discussed whether we...

were energised by faith
... rather than just keeping things going

had an outward-looking focus
... with a "whole life" rather than a "church life" concern

seek to find out what God wants
... discerning the Spirit's leading rather than trying to please everyone

face the cost of change and growth
... rather than resisting change and fearing failure



operate as a community
... rather than functioning as a club or religious organisation

make room for all
... being inclusive rather than exclusive

do a few things and do them well
... focused rather than frenetic



As a result, we felt that (among other things):

We ought to provide more Bible Study and small groups
We must continue to nurture families and young people
We need to be more rooted in the local community
We need more openness and less prejudice!
We talk about forgiveness, but we have real factions in the church family that need addressing, otherwise our talk means nothing
We ought to provide some sort of 'mentoring' service to newcomers
We ought to explain our finances more to new people (though realising that some who have come for years conveniently ignore the facts!)

It was an excellent day, made so (as I said in my sermon the next morning) by the openness, honesty and humour of those who attended. I certainly felt that in the ten years I have been here it was the one which inspired and encouraged me the most.

And on the subject of ten years...

I would like to thank everyone for their prayers, good wishes, cards and gifts on the 10th Anniversary of my induction. Thanks to all who made the party so successful, both the caterers and those who provided entertainment in many and varied forms!! The John Lewis and Ryanair vouchers will be put to very good use, as will the countless other kind gifts and tokens I received. Thank you so much, I was very touched by it all and it is most appreciated. Having the freehold, I can of course stay until I am 70...

Fairtrade for us all

The Fair trade stall at St Faith's has embarked upon two new ventures both designed to benefit both producers and our own church life in all its aspects including mission. In both cases the suppliers of the products concerned have made it their policy to aid both producers and retailers, of whom many are churches and charities in their own right. Our suppliers are Traidcraft and Merian Derwent. We are hoping for a long and fruitful relationship which will help our own situation as well as that of the producers.

TRADCRAFT

Established in 1979 as a Christian response to poverty, Traidcraft is the UK's leading fair trade organisation. Traidcraft runs development programmes in some of the poorest countries in the world, and campaigns in the UK and internationally to bring about trade justice.

Traidcraft has over 5000 supporters who regularly sell fair trade products to others. These people are known as Traidcraft Fair Traders. They trade in various places, including churches, schools, colleges or universities, at work and in cafés, shops, B&Bs or hotels. Fair Traders receive a 10% discount on foods and tissue products and a 15% discount on all other products which will benefit our church significantly.

Traidcraft Exchange, the charitable arm of the organization, helps poor producers to engage in trade and build a better future for themselves and their families. Their work is focused on six key areas: cotton producers; tea producers; craft producers; fair trade; business services; and influencing and advocacy. All projects in developing countries are implemented in partnership with local organisations that are familiar with the situation on the ground and have first-hand knowledge of the issues to be tackled. This builds local capacity, ensures that projects are appropriate to the local context, and increases the long-term sustainability of project impacts.

Kathleen Zimak

Is there life after M.S.I?

Fr. Neil



The Mission Shaped Introduction course has come and gone. What next? Keeping in the forefront of our minds the fact that the traditional way of being and doing church only connects with (at best) 40% of the population, how do we seriously engage with the business of trying to reach the other 60%?

The Ministry Team and PCC commend to you a prayer discernment process at the end of which, we hope, will be some clearer understanding of how a fresh expression of church might look for this community.

On Monday 2nd June in S. Faith's and Tuesday 3rd June in S. Mary's there will be an evening of prayer. Both events will be exactly the same so just come to the one that suits your diary! At 7pm there will be a time of meditation, prayer and reflection followed at 7.30pm by a simple Eucharist of the Holy Spirit. It will end at 8pm with refreshments. The Revd. Alan Brooks has kindly agreed to facilitate this process and then the following week, Monday 8th June at 7.30pm in S. Mary's Annexe we will draw together our thoughts and ideas and make a firm decision on what we will definitely risk!

Do you care about the 60% who currently cannot relate to the way our churches are? If so, please come along and pray with us!

Bookstall Bargains

Two recent publications for your consideration!



'Food from St Faith's' is sub-titled 'Rehashed recipes from the Centenary Cookbook'. It is a reprint of the 102 recipes provided by members of St Faith's in 2000 and includes courses large and small for every taste. Mary Crooke, who compiled and edited the original edition, is selling these for £3 and has already raised over £75 for church funds.

'Diversions' is subtitled 'Outings and Opinions' and is a collection of *Newslink* articles published over the last 20 years or so. They are a mixture of travelogues, being accounts of visits to churches, cathedrals and other religious foundations the length and breadth of England, Wales and Scotland., and commentaries on news items, trends in society and suchlike, which prompted editorial outbursts, some serious and others less so. Finally, there are a scattering of poems not already published in my three collections of verse. The editor/author/pontificator will be happy to send a copy (£5, incl p.andp.) to anyone interested. Copies will be on sale in church quite soon.

Mary... not Mary Poppins!

Sermon preached by Father Michael Wood at the recent May Devotions Service

It is exactly a year ago since I was reading one of the trashiest books I have ever set eyes upon: it is Emma Brookes' book "What Would Barbara Do?" and it is subtitled "How musicals can change your life." This book did change my life because it pricked one of the bubbles of my life and of course once a bubble is pricked it can never be put back together again. The book talks about Mary Poppins, telling us that the movie started out as a novel written by the Australian P.L. Travers; just listen to what she has to say:

“The original Poppins has small eyes to denote shrewdness. She is vain, very vain, constantly looking at herself in reflective surfaces and concluding ‘very smart, very interesting.’ She throws out terrible glances and levitates Uncle Albert’s landlady against her will. She is not remotely sentimental about the Bird Woman, a vagrant who clogs up the steps of St Paul’s Cathedral and whose birds, she suggests, ought to be baked in a pie. It transpires towards the end of the book that Mary Poppins has a cousin at the zoo, who is a snake. All of which is rather strange, given that Poppins has come to stand for a nauseating kind of niceness. But as it turns out, and as her creator puts it, she is a woman who ‘never wastes time being nice.’”

We can see some of the Mary Poppins we know and love but it is definitely not the same. Of course Hollywood in General and Walt Disney in particular is quite capable of redacting almost any story to suit its purpose, and it certainly did a job on the Blessed Mary Poppins. As much as she deserves homage, it is not Mary Poppins we are here to celebrate tonight. We are here to honour Our Blessed Lady as mother of Our Lord, the Madonna who liked to say, “Yes.” In the pages of scripture we have a series of snapshots from the time of the Annunciation, when a young woman was given a task which would change the course, not only of history but of eternity. However there is rather more to Our Lady than simply the one who provides us with a ‘jolly holiday.’ Over the years we seem to have woven the strands together to form a story which is not actually the case. There is rather more to Our Lady than is sometimes allowed to meet the eye.

There is a delightful monologue called ‘The Bethlehem Charabanc Trip’ which in humorous terms gives us a slightly different perspective.

“Now our Joe, there’s summat you should know
I’ve just discovered I’m going to give birth
He looked straight in her eye “Yer what?” she said “Aye”
And started explaining for all she was worth.

Joe says “I’m supposing we should be glad we were chosen
Fancy picking us, what’s the odds!
There’s summat I’m missing, do you get pregnant by kissing?
She says, “No, you daft tatie, it’s God’s.”

She thought she’s best mention divine intervention
Cause Joe was smelling a rat.
He says, “Oh aye, hunky dory, you mean God takes the glory
And leaves us with the bairn, begger that.”

Divine intervention is all well and good, but it is costly and that is a lesson Mary was certainly going to learn, not only in terms of just how perplexing the ways of God can be but also the pain of the prophecy that a sword will pierce her heart. The Virgin Mary provides us with many things, but the one thing she does not give us is a picture of “nauseating niceness” which is exactly how she is so often portrayed.

Our second reading, the wedding at Cana, is a story we can all relate to. A wedding. And it is here where Mary's humanity comes through as she shares the anxiety of the wine running out and we then hear a comment which is just so vital. As Mary said yes, so she now tells others, "If you want to share in this new wine, you also must now do the same, you also must say yes." Of course those who were present at that moment could in no way have interpreted these events in the way I have just put them to you, they simply heard, "Do as he says and it will be right" but what's the difference? Perhaps I am guilty of looking back and adding a mystic meaning where none exists, I leave you to decide for yourself. What I do know though is that we do Our Lady a disservice if we take away her humanity because if we do that then she becomes disconnected from us but more importantly if we take away her humanity we also take away her connection to Our Lord, whose mother she was.

How amazingly coincidental it is that this week there has been an item on the "odd news" which said that an image of the Blessed Virgin Mary has been found on a food griddle in a restaurant on the Mexican Californian border and moreover the parish priest has declared that it is a true likeness! It is not just a matter of how coincidental that she appears there at this moment, but just how does the priest know that the smudge in the grease actually does look like her? So we are here to give thanks for a woman who knew joy and sorrow, a woman whose simple yes enabled us to live the life with God which she also was privileged to live.

John Keble's poem for the Annunciation touches on that very same thought:

Ave Maria! Mother blest,
To whom, caressing and caress'd
Clings the Eternal Child;
Favour'd beyond Archangels' dream,
When first on thee with tenderest gleam
Thy new-born Saviour smil'd:

Ave Maria! Thou whose name
All but adoring love may claim,
Yet may we reach the shrine;
For He, thy Son and Saviour, vows
To crown all lowly lofty brows
With love and joy like thine.

Blessed is the womb that bare Him – blessed
The bosom where his lips were pressed,
But rather blessed are they
Who hear His word and keep it well,
The living homes where Christ shall dwell,
And never pass away.



Yes, may we through the prayers of Our Lady truly know within our hearts just how gracious the Lord is and may He in His mercy there for ever dwell.

The Parish Directory and Church Organisations



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Liz Mooney, Parish Office, 32 Brooklands Avenue
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email parishadministrator@btinternet.com

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Fr. Dennis Smith, 16 Fir Road, Waterloo. L22 4QL. 928 5065

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Mrs Cynthia Johnson, 30 Willow House, Maple Close, Seaforth, L21 4LY. 286 8155

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Mrs Rosie Walker, 17 Mayfair Avenue, Crosby. L23 3TL. 924 6267

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Mrs Cathy Taylor, 152 Stuart Road, Crosby. Liverpool L23 0QQ. 286 2710

HALL BOOKINGS

Mrs Ruth Winder, 36 Milton Road, Waterloo. L22 4RF. 474 3633

TUESDAY OFFICE HOUR: 6.30 – 7.30 pm (wedding and banns bookings)

Mrs Lynda Dixon, c/o the Vicarage. 928 7330

BAPTISM BOOKINGS

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DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

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Mr Ken Bramwell, 93 Rimrose Valley Road, Crosby. L23 9TF 924 9894

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Sunday 11.00 am in the Church Hall. Angie Price 924 1938

CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER

Mrs Linda Nye, 23 Bonnington Avenue, Crosby. L23 7YJ. 924 2813

CHURCH CENTRE

1, Warren Court, Warren Road, Blundellsands

MEN'S GROUP

Sunday 8.00 pm monthly. Rick Walker 924 6267

CUB SCOUTS

Tuesday 6.30 - 7.45 pm. Alan Jones 284 7038/07761 960671

Thursday 6.30 - 7.45 pm. Mike Carr 293 3416

SCOUTS

Tuesday 8.00 - 9.30 pm. George McInnes 924 3624

RAINBOWS

Monday 4.45 - 5.45 pm. Geraldine Forshaw 928 5204

BROWNIE GUIDES

Monday 6.00 - 7.30 pm. Sue Walsh 920 0318 Mary McFadyen 284 0104

CHOIR PRACTICE

Friday 7.15 pm - 8.30 pm. Sam Austin 07921 840616

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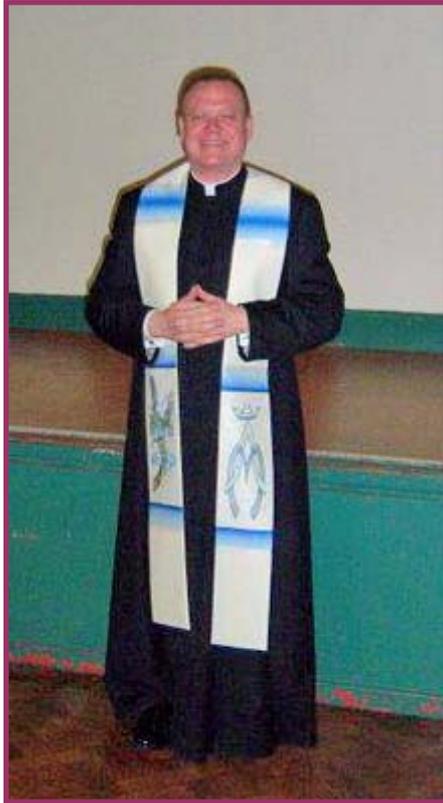
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**THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND**



Diocese of Liverpool



**At a party to celebrate the 10th
anniversary of Fr Neil's
induction the Walsingham
Circle presented him with
this stole**