

WORTH ABBEY PARISH REPORT 2016

Introduction

This is our second written annual report on the Parish, designed to replace the oral reports previously given at the AGM. The AGM this year will feature talks on the refugee crisis, both internationally and nearer to home in the Diocese and in Crawley, as well as allowing time for questions and discussion about this report and about any Parish matters that are raised.

We hope you will find the report interesting. We thank all those who contribute to the work of the Parish and encourage all parishioners to become involved with some of the many activities that are undertaken.

Parish Pastoral Council

The PPC is not a decision-making or governing body of any kind. It serves as a consultative group for the Parish Priest to use as a sounding board and to enable key topics to be raised by him or by PPC members and discussed among a representative group of parishioners.

The PPC agendas for 2016 have covered (among other things) youth, Irundu, evangelisation, liturgy, parish events, welcoming, PPC membership and the AGM. We have attempted to consider how to realise Pope Francis's vision of 'a poor Church for the poor' and have debated the challenges facing the Parish and the Church openly and constructively.

We are most grateful for the helpful contributions and high attendance of the PPC members over the period and for their wisdom, support and challenge.

We are always keen to hear from parishioners about any aspect of parish life on which they have a view or would like to make a suggestion, so please feel free to approach any of the PPC members.

George Fitzsimons

Worth Irundu Friendship

General

Father Stephen Mudoola has been appointed Monsignor and made Vicar General of Jinja Diocese. He remains the parish priest of Irundu.

Father Stephen's visit

We invited Father Stephen to visit us in September. Unfortunately his visa application was turned down for reasons which we believe were unjustified. We are investigating ways in which we can get this decision reversed.

Projects

Health Centre: Cynthia Haynes visited Irundu in August. The health centre continues to be busy with an average daily attendance of 39 patients which includes ante-natal mothers. In addition we are responsible for babies born to mothers at home but who have attended our ante-natal clinics. Our area has the highest fertility rate in Uganda at 6.7 to 6.9 and only 44% deliveries in clinics.

Jenny's Sale/Medical Fund: Jenny's sale of Jams and Chutneys has raised over £1,000 to support the medical fund enabling many people to have life changing treatment.

Tins/Benches: Paul and Helle Yates continue to organise the collecting tins. During 2016 a total of £491 was given to Irundu enabling a further 13 benches to be made.

Friendship House: We have handed the house over to Irundu parish. They like to have visitors from Worth but there are other visitors during the year who enjoy staying there.

Vocational School: The carpentry workshop and tailoring department are going well. The hairdressing teacher is to be replaced.

Car Mechanics Workshop: Thanks to funds raised by Worth School Junior House a workshop for training car mechanics has been built. The Parish undertook to raise funds to provide equipment. A successful campaign raised well over the target of £4,900.

Sponsorship: We need to provide sponsorships so more youngsters can learn a trade and work their way out of poverty. The WIF committee will be considering how best to move this forward.

Events

Java and Jazz: A successful fund raising dinner was held at Java and Jazz, in Forest Row, on 8th February 2016, and there was a repeat dinner on 27 February 2017.

Irundu Mass: A successful Mass and Reception were held on Saturday, 8th October. The Uganda Martyrs Choir provided music in the Abbey Church and afterwards at the reception in Compass House

Worth Irundu Friendship Committee

Fr Paul, Paul Ambridge, Cynthia Haynes, Kir Bennett Horner, Gerry Loney, Joe O'Dwyer, Robin Williamson (Chairman).

We would very much like to hear from any parishioner who would be interested in joining the committee - please get in touch with Father Paul.

Robin Williamson

Worth Stitchers

We are a small group that have been meeting regularly since April 2003. We have been given a variety of work to do from mending vestments to making the linens used during Mass and mending habits. We have also done repairs on the choir robes and fixed altar frontals and a myriad of other jobs. There are jobs to suit those who like hand sewing and those who prefer to use their sewing machines.

We are always pleased to welcome new members on a regular or on an occasional basis. We meet on the last Wednesday of the month from 9.30-12.00 in Compass House. There is tea and home-made cake as a reward!

Contact Christina (cfitzs3287@aol.com) for more details.

Christina Fitzsimons

Crawley Interfaith Network

The Crawley Interfaith Network puts on a very interesting range of talks and events and is a wonderful place to meet local people from other faiths.

Once every two months they provide the food for the Sunday lunch at the Friary for people who are homeless or in insecure accommodation. It is always a delicious curry (cooked by a Hindu chef) with rice. Guests are also able to take home sandwiches for their supper.

They would welcome help from parishioners in setting up, serving the food and clearing up afterwards. Contact the parish office for more details.

Last year the Interfaith Network supported the work of Refugees Welcome in Crawley and provided provisions and clothes for Syrian Relief Aid Collection at Langley Green Mosque.

In addition, they have provided a volunteer to the West Sussex Hate Crime Team and undertook training for lay chaplaincy in the NHS. They have also had some informal meetings socialising and discussing interfaith topics over a cup of coffee.

Christina Fitzsimons

First communion

Junior Church is a children's liturgy provided during the 9:30 Sunday morning Mass. There are two classes- one for pre-school aged children and the other for school aged children. We sing some songs, have a simple Liturgy of the Word, encourage a discussion about what they have heard and a fun activity relating to the Gospel reading. There is a team of 6 people who take it in turns to teach the classes, in creative and instructive ways. The classes are held during the school term and break for the school holidays.

The First Holy Communion (FHC) programme at Worth Abbey Parish is offered to children who are rising 8 and slightly older. This is taught in two parts. The first 6 sessions prepare the children for receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The second 6 sessions prepare them for receiving their First Communion. The children and families celebrate each Sacrament received with a party, where they are given certificates signed by the Parish Priest. Classes meet on a Saturday morning during school term time.

Rachel Davies

Confirmation and young people

This year we have 10 Young People (who attend 8 different schools) who come together once a month for one common purpose. This purpose is to grow in their faith and Christ inspired life through preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. The programme we are using is 'Transformed in Christ' rooted in scripture, prayer and exploration of what it means to be a Catholic Christian in today's world. Each session lasts 2 and a half hours and finishes with meditation, music and prayer. During Lent we also hold a day's Retreat on the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The highlight each time we meet is the sharing of friendship over tea and cake. The young people are encouraged to take part in Diocesan youth events and following Confirmation we will be offering a follow up series of meetings to inspire full involvement in Parish life and the wider community.

Theresa Hobson-Frohock

Altar serving

The Altar Serving team at Worth Abbey is a branch of the Archconfraternity of St. Stephen. Young servers who are eight years old and have received their First Communion are invited to join us. Our main responsibility is to serve at the Sunday Community Mass at 9.30am. We also serve the Saturday evening Parish Mass at 5.00pm, and the Sunday Mass at West Hoathly.

Worth School has its own team of servers for Thursday Worship. Some school servers are also members of our Parish team, serving on Sundays as well. Our full team serve the Christmas Midnight Mass, and all the ceremonies of Holy Week, and our senior servers assist our bishop at Arundel Cathedral for major Liturgies such as the Chrism Mass, and the Corpus Christi Procession.

We welcome young people who are at least eight years old and have received their First Communion to come and join our Abbey Servers Team.

Michael Weston-Burt

Refugees Welcome Crawley

The UN needs the world to resettle 320,000 most vulnerable Syrian refugees. So far the UK has taken just 90, 30 more than Luxembourg but 1.1 million fewer than Lebanon. Refugees Welcome Crawley is one of 90 such groups around the UK and is encouraging Community Sponsorship to increase the number of vulnerable Syrian refugees finding sanctuary in the UK. They offer language teaching, interpreting, befriending, youth group social support for unaccompanied minors (half of all refugees internationally are under 18), gardening and practical support such as clothing. Local refugees are joining local people in a sewing project held every Wednesday from 6 to 7pm in the Friary Hall, Crawley. Crawley runs a weekly talk club where refugees and local families meet up to practice their language skills. Two Syrian families have been settled in Crawley, one in East Grinstead and one in mid-Sussex.

The AGM is at 7pm on 18 April at the URC hall in Three Bridges. Everyone is welcome.

Lana Peile

Traidcraft

Traidcraft has been part of our Parish community life since the 1990s. The stall opens each Sunday after the 9:30 Mass and after the 5pm Children's Mass on the first Saturday of each month. Through our trading we continue to promote Traidcraft's pioneering work in transforming the lives of small-scale artisans, farmers and their communities across the developing world.

We would like to thank our team of dedicated volunteers who have helped us since we took over the organisation and running of the stall from Patricia Wallace after Easter. Any newcomers to this Parish ministry would be most welcome.

We would also like to thank all those parishioners who have generously supported us during the past year, especially over the Christmas period.

As has been customary in previous years, any profit made by our stall during the trading period is given to a charity.

Nigel Spencer, Sr Jo Threlfall and Beryl McNulty

Tithing

The Parish continues its commitment to donate 10% of its regular income from collections at Mass to various causes through a programme of tithing.

Suggestions for our donations are always welcome. We aim to support primarily causes which satisfy one or more of the following criteria; Church connection, local relevance, and inability easily to raise funding elsewhere. This means that while we respond to international crises we also look at more local causes.

For 2016 our total tithing commitment is likely to be in the region of £8,000; of this £3,500 has already been disbursed focussing on foodbanks, homeless people and pro-life groups in the area. We are aiming to agree the balance for 2016 later in March with additional emphasis on the work of SVP and those working with refugees in the Sussex area. We are then open to suggestions for our 2017 programme which is likely to be based on a figure of £8,000 assuming our budget for the year is met. Please let any member of the committee have suggestions (or send them to Mandy at mhorton@worth.org.uk; we try to meet these where we can but have the thankless task of prioritising between a number of very worthy claims.

The committee consists of Fr Paul, Patricia Wallace, Robin Williamson and John Cooper (chairman), with Mandy acting as our indispensable secretary.

John Cooper

Finance

The finance committee has undergone a number of changes in composition over the year 2016. John Cooper is acting chairman, and the other members are Fr Paul, Jim Brophy, John Fitzpatrick and Robert Record. Mandy Horton continues as secretary. In addition Paddy Hall has taken over the role of bookkeeper from Gill Moorton who has served us very loyally for many years. We are also continually grateful to those who count the weekly collections and other income and arrange their being banked; we do need more volunteers in this area – it only involves at most half a day once a month so please come forward.

The summary income and expenditure statement for the year 2016 are appended. Offertory donations are ahead of budget and 4% ahead of 2015. This in part reflects a stabilisation of the previous downward trend in Mass attendance which was almost identical in 2016 to the 2015 figure at 343, based on soundings over the month of October in each year.

There is always uncertainty as to the timing of recovery of tax through the gift aid system which has been slower than expected but the gift aid programme is showing its worth in adding 13% to the cash collections and standing orders; we continue to press for more of our regular Mass goers to sign up to gift aid so as to maximise revenue; if all offertory receipts were gift aided the maximum recovery would rise to 25%.

Expenditure is broadly in line with budget and we do not foresee any extraordinary items for the next year. However in cash terms the position is stated before the annual tithing of 10% of offertory cash which means that we need to provide for a cash outgoing of approximately £8,000. Therefore we have a deficit after tithing of approximately £4,268, which we expect to be compensated by the receipt of tax relief, so overall about break even. No cause for complacency however.

We have still a healthy accumulated surplus but need to increase our income as it is difficult to find other cost savings and at present there is little to cover contingencies going forward.

John Cooper

WORTH ABBEY PARISH

12 Months to 31st December 2016

	2016 ACTUAL	2016 BUDGET	2016 VARIANCE
Income			
Offertory/Donations Totals	£85,958	£80,900	£5,058
610040 - Tax Rebates	£13,371	£14,750	-£1,379
Fundraising Totals	£289	£300	-£11
610070 - Bank Interest	£268	£100	£168
Income -Totals	£99,886	£96,050	£3,836
Expenditure			
Salary Totals	£35,623	£39,500	£3,877
Travel Totals	£1,053	£2,600	£1,547
Office Expenses Totals	£8,892	£6,600	-£2,292
Establishment/Rents Totals	£20,932	£20,800	-£132
Fundraising Costs Totals	£1,415	£1,050	-£365
Liturgy Church General	£6,361	£4,500	-£1,861
Pastoral Expenses Totals	£849	£2,030	£1,181
Schools	£0	£300	£300
Diocesan Levies	£21,029	£18,500	-£2,529
Expenditure - totals	£96,154	£95,880	-£274
Surplus/-Deficit	£3,732	£170	£3,562
Tithing (Estimate)	£8,000	£8,000	£0
Surplus /Deficit	-£4,268	-£7,830	£3,562