

## Introduction

My dear parishioners,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the 5th edition of our parish report. During our daily Mass I always give thanks to the Lord and his Mother for the many blessings and graces which our parishes have received. The Lord has always guided, protected and blessed our parishes with many good things and successes.



The joining of both the Sacred Heart parish and the Holy Trinity parish has merged in such a nice way, and we hope that we keep this unity ever abundantly blessed.

This year we are celebrating particularly a Holy Year of Mercy. It invites each one of us to reflect on and contemplate the great Mercy of God and how we can express this love and mercy in our daily lives, so that we can help each other to gain many blessings and benefit from the Divine Mercy of God.

Our faith is very practical and sincere, and helps make us aware of many refugees and asylum seekers arriving in the UK. Our parishes are looking at ways to provide support and care for these unfortunate brothers and sisters who have to leave their homeland looking for safety. It is our task is to help and to respond to their needs whenever we can.

My dear brothers and sisters, thank you for all your generosity and for supporting our parishes so wonderfully. May the Lord continue to be with us, and to bless and keep our parishes always in His love.

Fr. Michael Ho



JUBILEE OF MERCY

Many thanks to Fr. David for his shared ministry with us.



Father David has also been appointed as Prison Chaplain to HMP Dovegate, Uttoxeter. We wish him all of the blessings of the Lord in this very challenging ministry.

## Sacramental Statistics

At Holy Trinity we have together celebrated many different sacraments together:

<b>Baptisms:</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>1st Holy Communions:</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Confirmations:</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Weddings:</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>RCIA</b>	<b>5</b>

## Lourdes Pilgrimage

Every year a group of about 20 people from Holy Trinity Parish (and friends) take part in the Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes. This takes place at the end of May and is led by the Archbishop. Last year we celebrated 75 years of the Diocesan



Pilgrimage and 25 years of the Holy Trinity group taking part. New pilgrims are always very welcome and bookings are usually made through the Parish office in February.

## Lourdes Fundraising group

Our annual Christmas Bazaar was held in the Church Hall on Saturday, 26<sup>th</sup> November. Stalls included three tombola's, Christmas cakes and puddings, face painting, gifts and toiletries and home made cakes and produce. Raffle tickets were sold at church and during the bazaar. The first prize was £100 cash and there were many other prizes, including a wonderful Christmas hamper. The bazaar raised in excess of £2000.



During the year we also held a Lenten lunch and a cream tea. The funds we raise are used to send sick pilgrims on the Diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes each May. Last year we were able to fund two pilgrims and we hope to fund at least four pilgrims this year. Many thanks to all our supporters, who enable us to raise these funds.

## The May procession

The May Procession was once again a great success with parents and children gathered once again to sing and praise the love of Our Blessed Mother.



**Parish website** - please contact **Richard Daniels** <richard@cbit.co.uk> if you wish to add an event or announcement.

## Deacon Daniel

I am so grateful to you all for the many prayers offered for my wellbeing following my rather sudden



need for heart bypass surgery, and especially for my grandson, Noah, who, at just 5 years old, needed to have an emergency pacemaker fitted. Thank God, we are both through the worst and on the road to full recovery.

As I resumed my ministry, I was so pleased to baptise and receive into the Church my daughter-in-law, Charmaine, at the Easter Vigil alongside 5 others who had journeyed along the RCIA programme, and in May to conduct my first marriage in Holy Trinity of Caroline Brady, the daughter of my dear friends, Gerry and Teresa Brady.

As ever, I am always indebted to my wife, Azora, for her on-going support. As we enter into this Year of Mercy, we have just been accepted (by BIRCH) to be a host family for asylum seekers hoping to stay in the UK. This will, I am sure, create its own challenges, but we are reminded of Our Lord's request to *'put out into deep water'* (Lk 5:4). Please keep this work in your prayers.

# Holy Trinity & Sacred Heart Parish

www.htrc.org.uk

Editor: Daniel Hurd

2015

## Holy Trinity Choir by Ken Mackey

The choir has continued to try to fulfil its core objective of “Enhancing the liturgy through music”.

By our singing we hope to encourage the whole congregation to join in, and to hear a congregation in full voice is an uplifting experience. We also try to create a prayerful atmosphere with our singing of the Mass parts, the hymns and motets. We believe that it is important to keep alive the great traditions of Catholic music down the ages. To that end we sing music by composers from the great Renaissance era such as Palestrina, Thomas Tallis and Allegri, through to present day composers. One highlight of the year has been learning a setting of “Little Lamb Who Made Thee” by local composer Gordon Thornett.

We have sung at several weddings and not a few funerals during the year, and several of our choristers joined the congregations from the local parishes at the BBC “Songs of Praise” recordings, which are currently being “drip fed” into the Sunday afternoon programmes.

Our thanks are due to our small band of organists, one of whom, Cicely Kelly has been playing the organ at our church for over 55 years.

Although the age profile of the choir members remains very high, we have been fortunate to have recruited two new choristers in recent months. If the choir is to continue for years to come we do need more younger parishioners to join, so anyone who feels that they could be part of the choir should please contact me, Ken Mackey 3080845 , or any of the choristers, or just come along to choir practice on Thursday evenings at 7.30. It is not necessary to be able to read music or to have any knowledge of musical theory. An ability to sing in tune and to climb the steps into the choir loft is all that is needed. You are assured of a warm welcome!

## Parish Prayer Group

The parish prayer group, which started in Dec 2014 continues to thrive. Meetings take place in the conference centre on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays of each month ( 7.30- 8.30 pm).

All are welcome. If anyone is interested in coming please **contact Jo Clements on 07860197069 or email [joclebini@me.com](mailto:joclebini@me.com)**

## Marriage Preparation Courses

Each year many young couples make the commitment to one another of marriage, and part of the preparation for this is to attend, where possible, a marriage preparation course.

We had over 18 couples in 2015 and more weddings are planned for this year.

All enjoy the informal but informative day, which also includes time to chat with each other over a leisurely lunch, that is provided as part of the day.



**Contact Jo Clements**

## Altar Servers by Mike Gaffney

On the Feast of St Stephen - 26<sup>th</sup> December 2015 at our annual Mass for Altar Servers William Pinder, Abi Delacroix-Humphreys and Selana Novak were enrolled into the Guild of St Stephen. Silver medals for 10 years service were awarded to Luke Hughes and Patrick Konalczyk.

Chris Langdown received the Medal of Merit having completed 36 years of dedicated service on the Altar at Holy Trinity.



Any boy or girl who has made their First Holy Communion are welcome to serve on the altar in this important ministry in the church.

## Catenian Association



The Catenians are an international association of Catholic laymen who meet monthly to pray and benefit from each others' company. Catenians are committed to their families , their faith, their parishes, their careers, their communities , those less fortunate and, above all, to each other. There is a circle (group) of the Catenians that meet in Sutton Coldfield to which a number of laymen in Holy Trinity and Sacred Heart parish belong. The Sutton Coldfield circle will be celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its foundation in October 2016. You will be most welcome to come along to one of our meetings and find out how you can benefit from meeting fellow Catholics and joining in our activities – **Contact Ryszard Weber – 0121 354 6550**

## Society of Saint Vincent de Paul—Holy Trinity



In this Year of Mercy the ten members of the SVP endeavour to bring the Corporal Works of Mercy

to those who are sick, lonely, bereaved or are vulnerable in the parish. Support such as shopping, driving them to an activity and just being company are all involved. Where financial help is needed it brings great relief to those families. The contribution from the refreshments after Mass on each Sunday morning comprise the major portion of SVP local funding.

Several events, the coffee morning, and the social event after the Mass for the Sick are popular judging by the numbers who attend. The work, the transporting of the sick, the first aid and the refreshments are largely provided freely by parishioners.

Every week dry food and clothing are collected in the church porch and taken to the Sanctuary (a joint venture between Saint Chad's and the Salvation Army) in Birmingham for the benefit of refugees. In a personal capacity one of our members attends there most days to teach the refugees to speak and understand English, which has strengthened the Parish's links with the Sanctuary.

Reach House in Erdington is a hostel for homeless boys and girls; many are offenders being rehabilitated. At Christmas toiletries, clothing and confectionery, all of which are donated by parishioners, are wrapped and given as personalised presents—probably their only Christmas gift.

These activities are only possible with the kindness and charity of parishioners. Thank you for your generosity, and for those wishing to find out more about the work of the SVP we meet every 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month in the Conference Room, at 7.30pm. **Contact—Martin Turner**

## Flower Ladies

Thanks to the generous support from Holy Trinity's parishioners, the flower ladies are able to enhance the beauty of Holy Trinity Church with fresh flowers each week.

**Contact: Maureen Kettell 0121 241 3424**

# Christmas Day Meal by Peter Stridgen

The 2015 Christmas Day meal was a huge success. With the generosity of the parishioners and local businesses, we were able to provide a beautiful meal and substantial hamper to all of our guests. We are as always overwhelmed at the response we get from our guests; this year saw a record number coming to the Church Hall, resulting in a wonderful party atmosphere—the feedback has been wonderful. We were lucky to be able to secure a DJ specialising in hits from the 1920's to the 1960's, who was wonderful and added that extra touch. All of our regular volunteers, musicians and servers were on top form and I can't thank them enough. A total of 129 meals were provided to the elderly and 40 or so helpers fed. Christmas 2016 will no doubt creep up on us before we know it, so until then, I wish you all a wonderful and happy year!



## Jesse Tree

This year the Parish provided a wonderful witness of generosity and love by providing over 400 presents for the children in the poorer parishes of the Diocese and for refugees and asylum seekers via St Chad's Sanctuary.



## First Communion and Confirmation

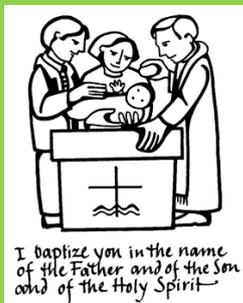
The Parish and School celebrated a wonderful First Communion celebration with 45 children and some 53 children for Confirmation on 29th November 2015 with Bishop Byrne.

## Preparation for Baptism

It is a great joy that so many parents request baptism for their children at Holy Trinity. The second Sunday of each month sees the gathering of parents whose request baptism for their child (Conference Room, 3 p.m.). This, the first sacrament, is so important and parents who have requested baptism should attend a



Preparation meeting. There is an opportunity to ask questions and understand more about the meaning and significance of the sacrament, what the service involves and meet other families. Parents should first request and book a baptism through the parish office (see form at the back of church), which is usually conferred on Sundays at 12.30 p.m. [martin.carol@btinternet.com](mailto:martin.carol@btinternet.com)



## The Ladies 232 Circle



is a group of Catholic Ladies who meet for friendship once a month. Meetings are held at Aston Wood Golf Club on the third Thursday of the month at 7.30pm. We enjoy a meal together and usually have a speaker. In the last 12 months our speakers have included Jeremy Thornton from auctioneers, Biddle and Webb, Simon Topman from Acme Whistles of Birmingham, who was extremely amusing; and from the Birmingham Royal Ballet we had Terry Gibson and ballerina Ruth Bliss. Each year we have a Guest Evening and a Charity Night and we enjoy various trips to the theatre and other visits. We would be happy to welcome new members, please contact **Barbara Robb Membership Secretary on 0121 353 8855 or Helen Evans on 0121 353 2505. February 2016**

## Amnesty International

The Amnesty International Sutton Coldfield Group has been established for around 40 years. During the early years the group was chaired by Denis Crisp and during the last 20 years by Andrew Hindle.

### Key activities

We meet once a month to discuss human rights issues, write letters in support of Amnesty International campaigns, and organise awareness-raising, campaigning and fundraising events.

### Current campaigns

These include campaigning on behalf of our adopted prisoner of conscience 'Salidzhon Abdurakhmanov' in Uzbekistan. He is considered to be a prisoner of conscience, imprisoned solely for carrying out his human rights work and lawfully exercising his right to freedom of expression.

The group are part of the campaign to 'stop torture', urgent actions in the Middle East, North Africa and on human rights abuses in 'China' and 'South America'.

**Monthly Meetings** - 8pm on the second Tuesday of every month in the conference room. New members are welcome.

[www.amnesty.org.uk/groups/sutton-coldfield/about-0](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/groups/sutton-coldfield/about-0)

## Saint Vincent de Paul - Sacred Heart

The Sacred Heart SVP meet on the first and third Friday's of the month after the 7.30mass. We have six



full members and five auxiliaries. Father Cousins is our spiritual director. Our main work is visiting the sick, lonely or housebound in their homes, in care, or in hospital. We provide companionship, take out for appointments etc and do shopping. Once a month we provide a two course lunch which we prepare in the church kitchen for about 25 people. This is followed by tea or coffee and biscuits and then bingo. We also help the young ex-prisoners at Reach House. There is a box in the church hall where people can put food and toiletries for them. We also attend quarterly meetings of the SVP district and the annual celebration in Birmingham Cathedral.

Contact: Chris Perry

## The Ladies Guild by Barbara Hadcroft

The Ladies Guild meets at 7:30pm, in the conference room, on the first Wednesday of the month, excluding January and August. We have a varied programme of speakers including talks on Josiah Mason, Samuel Johnson and the Forensic Science of handwriting.

Twice a year we have meals at the Toby in Shenstone and this year an afternoon tea was arranged at the Pacific Nurseries. These are very enjoyable 'get-togethers' for all our members.

We also raise money for charities. This last year we have given £300 to the Fireside Centre and £300 for Brushstrokes, both these charities work with homeless and disadvantaged people. Members bring clothes, bedding and other goods to each meeting and these are also passed on to the charities. We also gave Father Michael £500 to support Vietnamese Orphans. We raise money by a yearly parish raffle, sales tables and a lottery. A warm welcome is given to anyone who would like to join our group.

## Monsignor David Cousins

Two events during the year at Sacred Heart were connected.

On Sunday 22nd March, Father Cousins celebrated his 80th birthday. On Sunday, 12th April, he resigned as Parish Priest after 37 years.



The celebration of his birthday was very much a family affair as well as a wonderful Parish celebration. Father Cousins whole immediate family were present — his sister, her three children and grandchildren, together with a close friend, Father David Lloyd. Barbara (Father's housekeeper) assisted by three parishioners, cooked and served a splendid birthday lunch, which ended with coffee and birthday cake—indeed two, one made by a great niece.



The approach of his 80th birthday prompted Father Cousins to go to see the Archbishop. On his 75th birthday, as recommended by Canon Law, he had offered his resignation as Parish Priest, but indicated he was happy to continue should His Grace desire this. The Archbishop replied asking him to continue as Parish Priest.

Father had noticed, in the case of a number of priests who continued after their 80th birthday, it all ended in tears! He did not want this to happen to the sacred Heart. Despite enjoying good health, for which he daily gives thanks, he asked again to resign.

The Archbishop readily acceded to this request, and asked Father and Barbara "to continue to live in the presbytery and Father "to do as much and as little as you wish". The date was set for the Sunday after Easter, 12th April 2015.

## Cheshire Homes Group

Holy Trinity Parish have been involved in voluntary work at the Cheshire Homes (Greenacres) since its opening in the mid 60's. Originally the volunteers were known as Bed-Men as they used to put the residents to bed. In recent years their role has changed and they are now involved in running a residence bar one evening a week. We originally had 32 volunteers but these numbers have dwindled as the volunteers got older. Now we need new volunteers to help maintain this historic link with the Cheshire Homes. Some members of the parish are also volunteer drivers taking residents to appointments and to social occasions. Other parishioners are involved enabling residents to develop a variety of skills. This work is very rewarding and if you wish to be involved please contact Mac McConnell on 0121 378 2495.



## Poets Corner - The Road Not Taken Back Home

*Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
And sorry I could not travel both  
And be traveller, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in the undergrowth;*

*Then took the other, as just as fair,  
And having perhaps the better claim,  
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;  
Though as for that the passing there  
Had worn them really about the same,*

*And both that morning equally lay  
In leaves no step had trodden black.  
Oh, I kept the first for another day!  
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,  
I doubted if I should ever come back.*

*I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence;  
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I —  
I took the one less travelled by,  
And that has made all the difference*

**....Robert Frost**



## Sacred Heart, Sutton Coldfield

## Accounts

Year to 31st December 2015

2014				£	£	£
<b>INCOME</b>						
				27,765		
45406		Offerteries- Gift-Aid		11,684	39,449	
		Offerteries- Non-Gift-Aid			7,460	
		Tax refund from Gift Aid *		3072		
3622		Bazaar		<u>2304</u>	768	
1185		(Charity Donations)				
2631		Donations			3,255	
7515		Chaplaincy			2,315	
2673		Other Collections for Parish		710		
		Parish Hall		<u>301</u>	409	
549		Repository		953		
		(Expenses)		<u>975</u>	-22	
157		Newspapers			50	
		(Expenses)			81	
77		Votive Candles			4,260	
3450		Interest Received			13,833	71,858
10,224	79,503	Diocesan Unit Scheme - Income				
		Rental Income				
<b>EXPENSES</b>						
<b>LEVIES</b>						
15,164		Diocesan Levies		<u>15,322</u>	15,322	
<b>CHURCH</b>						
		Liturgical & Pastoral		3,585		
		Establishment & Maint'ce		17,811		
15,465		Supply Priests & Expenses		<u>470</u>	21866	
<b>PRESBYTERY</b>						
		Domestic		9,357		
		Personnel costs		8,040		
33,421		Establishment & Maint'ce		<u>12,087</u>	29,484	
<b>GENERAL EXPENSES</b>						
		Office Expenses		1,389		
		Bank Charges		178		
		Parish Fete		2,768		
		Parish Donations		250		
6,235	70,285	Sundries		95	4,680	71,352
	<u>9,218</u>	<b>OPERATING SURPLUS</b>				<u>506</u>
<b>EXCEPTIONAL</b>						
	<u>9,218</u>	<b>OVERALL SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR</b>				<u>506</u>
£7,818		Second Collections (Diocesan & Charitable)				£5,940
<b>Average Weekly Offertory Collection</b>						
£ 703		Gift-Aid		£534		
£ 170		Non - Gift-Aid		£225		
£ 873		<b>TOTAL</b>		<u>£759</u>		
* Relates to Tax Year 2014/2015						
£42,941		<b>Bank Balance</b>				43947
£8,000		Loans to other Parishes				7500
£120,000		Diocesan Unit Trust				120000
<u>£170,941</u>		<b>Total Assets as at 31st December 2015</b>				<u>£171,447</u>
All Church Property is vested in the Diocese						
F.C.						

## Financial Report

With a surplus of only £506 and the inevitable loss of rental income £13,800 when the garage move their premises to Tamworth shortly, there is going to be a substantial deficit for 2016.

Whereas the Parish has adequate funds invested with the Diocese, this can only be a short-term solution and the the implications for the longer term must be considered.



## Parish Bazaar

The organising committee of volunteers meet in June to start the planning for the Bazaar to be held in the following November, and once we have selected the dates for the Bazaar all the planning falls into place behind it. Volunteers are put in place for each stall and appeals go out in the Bulletin each Sunday starting in October.

As the donated goods arrive, the volunteers swing into action, sorting, allocating and pricing every item.

2 days before the Bazaar all the stalls are assembled and decorated in the church hall, and the final day sees everyone fine tuning all the displays ready for the big day.

Saturday 21 November brings everything to focus as 3 hours of frantic activity sees us trying to sell everything and get as much as possible at the same time. But its not just about the money, its a great community activity for the parish that pulls everyone in together for a good cause.

This year the Bazaar raised £3,072.00, a fantastic amount which was split 4 ways between our nominated charities;- St.Giles Hospice, West Midlands Air Ambulance, Sisters Hospitallers Foreign Missions and Parish Funds.

Thanks to everyone who help or supported us in this wonderful event

Patrick Carbery