

PASTORAL AREA BULLETIN

LEAVING SAFE HARBOURS The Journey So Far!

On Pentecost Day each year the words of one particular song always seem to drift through my mind. They are not words taken from one of the Pentecost hymns we sing in church; they are from a song made famous by Bette Midler: "**You are the Wind beneath my Wings**". To my mind this sums up the role of the Holy Spirit in our life together as Church - the Spirit of the Living God must be the wind beneath our wings, giving us the lift to soar high into the depths of the Father's love, empowering us to proclaim the Risen Lord as the visible proof of that love for all.



In his Pastoral Letter to us for Vocations Sunday on the 13th of April, Archbishop Patrick encouraged any of our young men who are prepared to take the risk of saying "Yes" to a call from the Lord to serve as a priest: I've got a job for you. Yet that risk is the call to all of us who would welcome the Spirit into our lives; taking the risk of being Spirit-filled witnesses to Him whose name we bear. Which, of course, is precisely what's at the heart of our Leaving Safe Harbours - to allow the Spirit to proclaim Christ through us, and to permit the Spirit to reshape us into more receptive and more efficient co-workers with Him. The reason for our very existence as Church is and must always be to proclaim Christ to others: Evangelisation.

On Sunday the 6th of April, your parish representatives on the Pastoral Area Council met together to consider the responses which you were invited to give to them at the parish meetings held during Lent. Also present at that meeting were three members of the Leigh Pastoral Area who are well ahead of us in this process (and even well-ahead of the Archdiocese in the process too!) Their comments on how we are approaching our own development of a "Pastoral Area Plan" were very favourable.

So, the journey so far: Our Pastoral Area is made up from thirteen parishes and is too large to be able to work together in every respect as a single unit. The obvious option seems to be to sub-divide into four or five smaller groupings of neighbouring parishes which would begin to work together and to relate more closely with one another (one possible linking is given under the "Pastoral Area Clergy Team" heading on the back page where our thirteen parishes have been linked together in five areas). Each area-link would consist of either two or three churches with each area-link eventually receiving the pastoral care of one priest and two deacons. Each parish within the area-link would share their resources (one shared newsletter, shared use of personnel, shared clergy, co-ordination of Mass times, etc).

The celebration of Mass each weekend in each church of the area-link would need to be timed so that it would be possible for the one area priest to celebrate all the (four?) Masses in the area churches. Each church would be guaranteed one Mass each weekend, either on a Saturday evening or on a Sunday; there would be a second Mass only if absolutely needed.

All of this is only at the discussion stage; no firm decisions have yet been made. Some changes will be forced upon us by circumstances and are inevitable (such as going down from nine priests as at present to four or five priests in the next few years). We hope to consult with all Mass-goers on some of the other points (such as the rationalisation of the times of Masses) through a survey and questionnaire to be distributed and completed during Mass in each of our churches over the coming months. Each Mass-goer will be asked such things as: (a) Which parish are you from? (b) What age-range are you in? (c) What time Mass do you usually attend? (d) If Mass was not available at this time in this church would you go to another church for Mass at the same time or would you still attend this church but at a different time?

There is no suggestion of any of our churches being closed at this stage, which is why we are investigating every option so that we can keep all of them open - and that doesn't just depend on the number of available priests, it depends also upon a thriving parish community with a sufficient number of active and involved parishioners - so not a shortage of active priests, but a shortage of active Catholics! Which brings us back to Pentecost ... and to the word proclaimed to us in the Second Reading at Mass on this Pentecost Day. (Read it again!)

May the Spirit of the Living God melt us, mould us, fill us and use us to proclaim here in our local area that "Jesus is Lord" to the glory of God the Father.

Fr. Tony Mangnall

Pastoral Area Leader

PASTORAL AREA CLERGY NEWS

Congratulations to two of our Pastoral Area priests who will be celebrating some very special Anniversaries during the coming weeks: **Father John Joyce**, Parish Priest of All Saints in Golborne, will celebrate the Ruby Jubilee of his Ordination to the Priesthood on Sunday the 8th of June. And **Father Frank Smith**, Parish Priest of Saint Patrick's in Newton-le-Willows, will celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of his Ordination to the Priesthood on Friday the 25th of July. It's staggering to realise that between them they have clocked up an amazing 100 years of service to the people of God as priests in the Archdiocese! We thank them for their faithful ministry and especially to the People of God here in our pastoral area parishes.

Congratulations to **Father James Preston**, a former parishioner of Saints Mary and John in Newton-le-Willows, who will celebrate the First Anniversary of his Ordination to the Priesthood on Sunday the 29th of June. Father James is a member of the Widnes Pastoral Area Clergy Team.

And **Mike Swift**, a member of Saint Wilfrid's parish at Stubshaw Cross, will be ordained Deacon on Sunday the 6th of July in the Metropolitan Cathedral. We offer him our prayers as the day of his ordination approaches and look forward to him joining our Pastoral Area Clergy Team.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS IN THE PASTORAL AREA

Sunday 18th May 2008

Solemn Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament (Forty Hours Devotion) begins at Holy Family, Platt Bridge: Sunday from 11.30am to 6.00pm; Monday and Tuesday from 10.00am to 7.00pm.

Sunday 18th May 2008

Blessed Sacrament Procession at 3.00pm at Saint Lewis, Croft (outdoors – weather permitting)

Wednesday 21st May 2008

A Day for Mercy Associates taking place at Saint Catherine's, Lowton from 10.30am to 3.30pm with a presentation given by John Wraite who works with poor children in the Philippines. Includes Holy Hour, Mass and lunch. (*Open to everyone whether Mercy Associate or not but numbers needed for catering purposes. Telephone 01942 206030 and leave a message*)

Sunday 22nd June 2008

Solemn Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament (Forty Hours Devotion) begins at All Saints, Golborne.

Friday 4th July 2008

Lourdes Jubilee Mass at Our Lady's, Bryn at 8.00pm (Part of the Archdiocesan Lourdes Jubilee Novena of Masses.)

Friday 4th & Saturday 5th July 2008

Training and Commissioning of New Ministers of Communion for the Pastoral Area parishes taking place at St. Catherine's, Lowton.

Sunday 24th August 2008

Annual Mass and Pilgrimage in honour of Saint Edmund Arrowsmith at the Church of Saint Oswald and Saint Edmund Arrowsmith, Ashton-in-Makerfield. Mass at 4pm followed by Veneration of the Holy Hand of Saint Edmund Arrowsmith.

Saturday 13th September 2008

Pastoral Area Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady and the English Martyrs at Ladyewell, Preston. Coaches going from Saint Catherine's, Lowton and Holy Family, Platt Bridge.

Saturday 20th September 2008

Pastoral Area Day at the Metropolitan Cathedral 11am to 3.00pm. Guided Tour of the Cathedral & Crypt and Mass with one of the bishops.

Saturday 27th September 2008

Pastoral Area Day for Parish Musicians at Holy Family Parish Hall, Platt Bridge from 10am to 2.30pm led by Fr. John Southworth and members of the Archdiocesan Liturgy Commission.

Sunday 28th September 2008

Parish representatives on the Pastoral Area Council meet at English Martyrs, Haydock at 7.00pm

Tuesday 7th October 2008

Celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation at Saints Mary and John, Newton-le-Willows. (Members of other parishes wishing to be confirmed please contact Father Fedigan).

Saturday 11th October 2008

Pastoral Area Day of Recollection led by Bishop Tom Williams from 10am to 4.00pm at Holy Family, Platt Bridge.

Sunday 12th October 2008

Solemn Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament (Forty Hours Devotion) begins at Saint Wilfrid's, Stubshaw Cross.

Tuesday 11th November

Celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation at Saint Oswald's, Ashton-in-Makerfield. (Members of other parishes wishing to be confirmed please contact Father Newns).

Tuesday 11th November

Celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation at Blessed English Martyrs, Haydock. (Members of other parishes wishing to be confirmed please contact Father Kennedy).

Sunday 30th November 2008

Solemn Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament (Forty Hours Devotion) begins at Our Lady's, Bryn

CONTACT THE NAMED CHURCH FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ANY OF THESE EVENTS

CURRENT MASS TIMES IN THE PASTORAL AREA

Saturday Evening Mass (Nine Masses)

5.00pm	Golborne: All Saints Stubshaw Cross: St. Wilfrid
5.30pm	Hindley Green: Sacred Heart
6.00pm	Haydock: English Martyrs
6.30pm	Lowton: St. Catherine of Siena Newton-le-Willows: St. David Platt Bridge: Holy Family
7.00pm	Bryn: Our Lady Immaculate Hindley: St. Benedict

Sunday Morning Mass (Fifteen Masses)

8.30am	Ashton: St. Oswald Croft: St. Lewis
9.30am	Hindley Green: Sacred Heart Newton-le-Willows: Ss. Mary&John
10.00am	Bryn: Our Lady Immaculate Lowton: St. Catherine of Siena Stubshaw Cross: St. Wilfrid
10.30am	Ashton: St. Oswald Golborne: All Saints Haydock: English Martyrs
11.00am	Croft: St. Lewis Hindley: St. Benedict Newton-le-Willows: St. David Newton-le-Willows: St. Patrick
11.30am	Platt Bridge: Holy Family

Sunday Evening Mass (One Mass)

4.30pm	Newton-le-Willows: Ss. Mary&John
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CATHOLIC CHURCH ON THE INTERNET

PASTORAL AREA
www.edmund-arrowsmith.org.uk

ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL
www.archdiocese-of-liverpool.co.uk

VATICAN
www.vatican.va

PASTORAL AREA CLERGY TEAM

Ashton-in-Makerfield, Bryn & Haydock

Priests:	Fr. Thomas Kennedy (Haydock) Tel. 01942 727005 Fr. Brian Newns (Ashton) Tel 01942 727249 Fr. Anthony Reynolds (Bryn) Tel. 01942 727271
Deacon:	Rev. Peter Barr Rev. Malcolm Cunliffe Rev. Frank Murray Rev. John O'Brien

Hindley & Hindley Green

Priest:	Fr. Joseph Weston Tel. 01942 255306
Deacon:	Rev. Ken Holding

Lowton, Croft & Golborne

Priest:	Fr. Bernard Eager (Lowton & Croft) Tel. 01942 206030 Fr. John Joyce (Golborne) Tel. 01942 728962
Deacons:	Rev. Derek Morris Rev. Frank Newton
Websites:	www.stcaths.co.uk

Newton-le-Willows

Priests:	Fr. Vincent Fedigan Tel. 01925 226106 Fr. Francis Smith Tel. 01925 225884
Websites:	www.stpatschurch.org.uk

Platt Bridge & Stubshaw Cross

Priest:	Fr. Anthony Mangnall VF Tel. 01942 966102
Deacons:	Rev. Roy Moore Rev. Terry Rose
Websites:	www.stwilfrid-hf-org.uk