

**PASTORAL AREA BULLETIN****NOW IS THE FAVOURABLE TIME**

As a child, the beginning of Lent used to terrify me. Well, what toddler wants to be greeted with: "Remember you are dust and to dust you shall return" when he's barely out of nappies and only just getting the hang of riding his bike without stabilisers! Thankfully, the revised words which accompany the giving of ashes are far less frightening yet no less challenging: "Turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel".

Being faithful to the Gospel, being a vibrant community which has the Gospel at its heart, is the challenge of Leaving Safe Harbours. During the course of this year and into the next, our Pastoral Area will be considering how better we can become a community in which the Risen Lord can be plainly seen to dwell. We will work towards making this a reality through the development of a Pastoral Area Action Plan.

By now, you should have been informed in your parishes that the Pastoral Area Council has been disbanded. In its place there will arise a Pastoral Area Working Group (PAWG). For "now is the favourable time" for us to move beyond words and towards more positive action. The PAWG will consist of the Pastoral Area Leader (yours truly!) and the clergy, with three representatives from each of our thirteen parish communities, along with representatives of the two Catholic High Schools within our Pastoral Area. Our task is to consult with you, through your representatives, and to give careful and studied attention to the various areas of our life and worship together - such as parishes working closer together in clusters of two or three served by just one priest; reviewing our actual buildings need; more efficient financial and personnel practices; good administration and better communication in and between parishes; the provision of Mass and the sacraments with fewer priests and for smaller congregations; shared programmes for sacramental preparation; opportunities for pastoral care and increased faith education; spiritual development; evangelisation and mission; joint social activities; ecumenical networking and establishing contacts with other agencies ... and so the list goes on!

The first meeting of the new PAWG will be at Saint Catherine's, Lowton on Sunday 15th of March at 7.00pm by which time you will have chosen (maybe even have had an election to choose) your representatives. They will consult with you frequently so you should never be kept in the dark about how our Pastoral Area Action Plan is coming along. The finished product will be presented to the Archbishop sometime in 2010 for his approval - and then the real work will begin as over a number of years we start to

become a "Pastoral Area in Transition". That's when constructive change will begin to happen, although there will most certainly be some changes needing to be embraced by some parishes even before then should any of our priests choose or be chosen to depart.

One thing that can never change is the Tradition of the Church, that faith which comes to us from the apostles. But many of our long-standing traditions (with a small "t") while good in their day, are now easily seen to be past their best. In order to experience resurrection, we must first let go, we must first let die. What is there in us and in our parishes that needs to be allowed to die - but only so that new and vibrant ways of proclaiming the Gospel and of being Church can be embraced? This will become much clearer as our journey of Leaving Safe Harbours continues, with the breath of the Spirit blowing ever stronger into our sails.

We face a relatively unknown future, but not one to be afraid of. Just as we have received the Gospel from past generations, so we seek to hand on that Tradition to our children's children and beyond. And we know the Risen Lord is with us. It is his voice, the voice of the Beloved of the Father, we will listen to, calling us, daring us, to go forward beyond our safe and comfortable harbours along a way he will lead us and to a future he will bring us. And to a once-terrified toddler, it's all really very exciting!

With every blessing to you and yours,

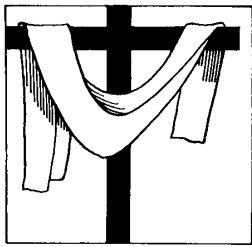
*Fr. Tony Mangnall*

**Pastoral Area Leader**

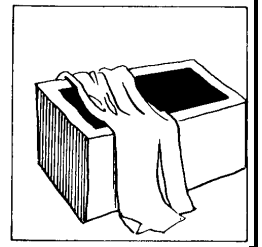
**P.S.** Congratulations to Adam Stewart from Holy Family Parish (the Secretary of our new PAWG - but not for very much longer!) who has been accepted by the Archbishop as a student for the priesthood of the Archdiocese of Liverpool. Adam will begin his academic studies this summer at the English College, Rome. Please hold him in prayer.

### **LEAVING SAFE HARBOURS PRAYER**

**Holy God, whose presence must be made known  
in any structures we build and renew,  
establish us as a community of hope,  
never seeking to contain your mystery,  
but willing to be led, by the Holy Spirit,  
beyond our safe harbours into new and sacred waters,  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**



# CELEBRATING LENT AND EASTER IN THE PASTORAL AREA



## STATIONS OF THE CROSS

### SUNDAY

3.00pm Holy Family, Platt Bridge  
5.00pm St. Catherine, Lowton

### TUESDAY

2.30pm Our Lady Immaculate, Bryn

### WEDNESDAY

7.30pm Our Lady Immaculate, Bryn

### FRIDAY

12 noon Ss. M & J or St. David, Newton  
6.00pm St. Patrick, Newton  
6.15pm St. Wilfrid, Stubshaw Cross  
7.00pm St. Oswald, Ashton  
7.00pm St. Benedict, Hindley  
7.00pm Ss. Mary & John, Newton  
7.00pm All Saints, Golborne  
7.30pm Our Lady Immaculate, Bryn  
7.30pm St. Lewis, Croft

## EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

### TUESDAY

7.30pm Saint Lewis, Croft

### SATURDAY

11.00am St. Oswald, Ashton  
11.30am Holy Family, Platt Bridge

## EARLY MORNING MASS

### MONDAY

7.00am Saint Catherine, Lowton

### MONDAY TO FRIDAY

7.15am Our Lady Immaculate, Bryn

## RECONCILIATION LITURGIES

Your priest is available to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Individual Confession) in your local church at fixed times every week or upon request - see your weekly parish newsletter for details. The following Pastoral Area Celebrations of Reconciliation are also offered during Lent:

### MONDAY 6TH APRIL 2009

Holy Family, Platt Bridge at 7.00pm  
Sacred Heart, Hindley Green at 7.30pm  
St. Catherine, Lowton at 7.30pm  
St. Patrick, Newton at 7.30pm

### TUESDAY 7TH APRIL 2009

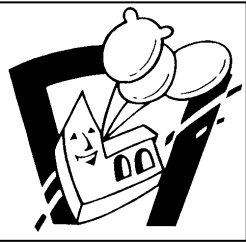
St. Oswald, Ashton at 7.00pm  
St. David, Newton at 7.00pm  
All Saints, Golborne at 7.30pm

### WEDNESDAY 8TH APRIL 2009

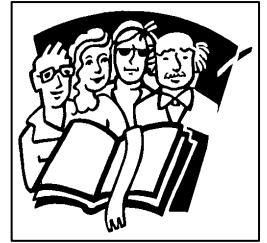
St. Benedict, Hindley at 7.00pm  
SS. Mary & John, Newton at 7.00pm

## THE EASTER TRIDUUM

Did you know that the Easter Liturgy isn't a one-day celebration but is actually a three-day feast? It's called the Easter Triduum and begins with the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday, through the Afternoon Solemn Liturgy of Good Friday, reaching its climax with the Vigil Ceremonies and First Mass of Easter on Holy Saturday night. It's an impressive three-day liturgy and the highlight of the whole year. Why not celebrate the full Easter Liturgy this year instead of just a part of it? See your parish newsletter for details of the Easter Triduum liturgy in your church.



# LENT SPECIALS AND PASTORAL AREA FORTHCOMING EVENTS



## LENT REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION GROUPS

"Churches Together in Ashton" are holding Wednesday Evening Times of Prayer at 7.30pm as follows: 4th March at St. Oswald's Catholic Church; 11th March at the Salvation Army Citadel; 18th March at St. Thomas' C of E Church; 25th March at Ashton Congregational Church; 1st April at St. Wilfrid's Catholic Church. Everyone welcome!

Ecumenical Reflections are taking place in the Conference Room at Saint Catherine's, Lowton on Wednesdays at 8.00pm (refreshments available from 7.45pm) on the theme of "The Quality of Mercy" and inspired by the book: Micah's Challenge". 4th March - Fr. Bernard Eager on "Love, Mercy and Micah"; 11th March - Rev. John Payne on "New Heaven and New Earth"; 18th March - Rev. Michael Reid on "Kingdom of God"; 25th March - Bill Hampson on "Justice and Poverty"; 1st April - Rev. Bill Stalker on "Walk Humbly With Your God".

"Churches Together in Bryn" are holding an Ecumenical Talk and Discussion on the Year of Saint Paul on Fridays in The Smith Room at Our Lady's Church, Bryn after Stations of the Cross at 7.30pm. All welcome!

### **Saturday 14th March 2009**

In-Service Formation and Reflection Day for all existing Eucharistic Ministers of the Pastoral Area Parishes at Holy Family Parish Hall, Platt Bridge from 10am to 4pm. Led by a team from the Archdiocesan Pastoral Formation Department. All Eucharistic Ministers welcome - reserve a place via your parish. (No charge - donation for buffet lunch only)

### **Saturday 18th April to Saturday 2nd May 2009**

Parish Mission at Holy Family, Platt Bridge and Saint Wilfrid's, Stubshaw Cross led by the Sion Community for Evangelism. (Monday 27th April to Friday 1st May - Evening Liturgy at 7pm in Holy Family Church). All members of the Pastoral Area parishes very welcome.

### **Saturday 2nd May 2009**

Mass for the Sick and Housebound at Holy Family, Platt Bridge with celebration of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick at 11.00am. All welcome.

### **Monday 18th to Friday 22nd May 2009**

Pastoral Area Mid-Week Pilgrimage to Lourdes. Cost £479 per person (based on two sharing a room; single room £65 extra). Enquiries to Father Tony Mangnall (Tel. 01942 866102)

### **Monday 1st to Wednesday 10th June 2009**

Ten Day Pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Enquiries to Fr. Tony Reynolds (Tel. 01942 727271)