

SHINE

Issue 2, July 2017

News from the parish communities of St Peter's, Hazel Grove and St Philip's, Offerton



My greatest adventure



Alpha starts on Tuesday afternoons in September at St Peter's Catholic Primary School. Alpha runs for ten weeks starting 26 September 2017 at 1.30pm.

Alpha is a series of ten interactive sessions that freely explore the basics of the Christian faith: open to anyone who is curious. The talks are designed to encourage conversation and explore the basics of the Christian faith in a friendly, open and informal environment. No question is out of bounds and you are free to discuss as much or as little as you wish. All welcome.

Alpha was Bear Grylls' 'greatest adventure'. Will it be yours?

For more information speak to Rachel McKay 0161 487 1659 or Karen Haines 07939 052 357



FROM THE PARISH PRIEST

Welcome to another edition of Shine. Once again you will see a range of articles about various aspects of the life of our two parishes and beyond so I hope you enjoy reading it. Over the next few months St Philip's will celebrate the Golden Jubilee of its foundation and we look forward to welcoming Bishop Davies to celebrate Mass with us on Saturday September 9th. A group will make a pilgrimage to Rome in October to mark the jubilee along with parishioners from Holy Spirit Marple who also are 50 this year. We have the annual pilgrimage to Lourdes at the end of July so there will be plenty to write about for our next edition later on this year. Happy reading!

Fr Peter

Amendment from the first issue of Shine

An incorrect email address for The Knights Templar in the first issue of 'Shine', which should read: www.TheKnightsTemplar1119.org.uk However the website at the moment is down for updating, no timescale, so please keep trying if you are interested.

Shining a light on our parish communities

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Looking back, looking forward

Hello, you may remember me on the back page of Shine's first issue. Here I am again to let you know how I got on. May I re-introduce myself to some of you who may not have read my last short article.

My name is Yakubu Gadzama Karagama and I am a surgeon working in Manchester Royal Infirmary and Tameside hospitals. I am originally from Lassa in the north east of Nigeria. I am deeply touched by the events in my home area where over 80% of children have lost access to education due to terrorist attacks over the last six years.

The education situation there is still a serious concern to me. Generous donations received from St Peter's parishioners last year were put to immediate use at the schools: providing desks, benches, school uniforms (for some the uniform is their only clothing) and salaries for the teachers. This year I personally set out to raise initial funds to start the rebuilding of a school.

On 28 May I was sponsored to do the very 'special' Manchester 10K run. I am not a regular runner! The reason why it was special was because it was only a week after the Manchester Arena bombing by a similarly motivated terrorist attack. The atmosphere in Manchester on the day of the run was electric with so many people, runners and supporters. Defiant and

united, we were not afraid as we know our God will never abandon us.

I would like to thank you all for your continuing support and prayers and for helping me achieve and exceed my target of £3,000.

There is still a huge task waiting to be done to help provide much needed education for these kids. Any contribution you can make would be hugely appreciated. Follow this website link to donate directly:

www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/Education-Must-Continue-Initiatives-EMCI. I hope that next time I can update you, it will be full of good news. Just keep praying!



Yakubu with his team of runners at the Manchester 10K run

Fun and fund raising

A good night was had by all in St Peter's parish centre on the evening of Friday 16 June when a quiz was held to raise funds for the LAMBS (Less Able in Mind and Body) and the Lourdes group. A redoubtable team led by Eileen Rigg ran out eventual winners. The fun evening consisted of a tasty supper of pulled pork baps lovingly crafted by Alison Morris, a far-ranging quiz beautifully led by Mel Vickers and two rounds of bingo ably marshalled by James 'Stand up' Walker. The marvellous sum of £1,000 was raised; this included matched funding by Santander Bank for which we are very grateful.

A St Peter's memory



Greg Hayward asked if we could print this old photo of a procession of altar boys at St Peter's Church. Do you recognise anyone? (Greg's brother Peter is one of them.)

A website with a difference

The website for our two parishes can be found at www.stpeterscatholic.church.

We're very lucky that we have made use of current technology at St Peter's. We have a discreet camera at the back which enables everything that happens in church to be seen live, there and then on our website. Many people find that if they're unable to get to church any time, they go to our website and see what's happening on the altar through the live stream.

Don't miss Fr Peter's words of wisdom, words of encouragement and inspiration. Tune in to daily Mass at 12 noon, or to any of our other Masses or services. Go to our website and choose Webcam. You can follow us from anywhere in the world – and many people do.

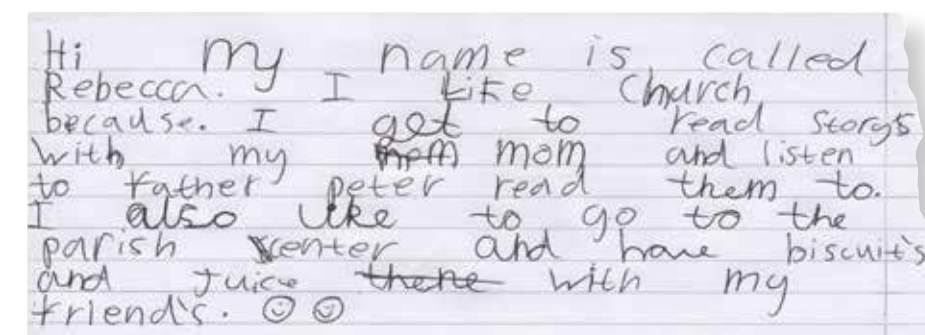
Some years ago, when we first started a live stream, Fr Peter spotted an Email that had arrived from someone

in Manila who was looking at our altar being broadcast in the quiet of the afternoon. He wrote to say that the sanctuary lamp, on the right hand side of the altar, had gone out. Fr Peter went onto the altar, replaced and relit the lamp, then replied to the Email to thank the observer and let him know he'd just attended to it. Immediately the man from Manila replied, saying "I know, I've just watched you do it!".

Recordings

When you're on the Webcam page of the website, go to the section Recordings. There you'll see listed, for example, all our Holy Week services from Palm Sunday onwards as well as some of the weddings, funerals and special services we have held at St Peter's.

Breaking news from Rebecca Hourihan



Farewells and welcomes

Since our last edition the following have had their funerals from St Peter's or St Philip's:

Lionel John Grocott

Maureen Butt

Ian Hirst

Pauline Banham

Helena O'Toole

Doris Head

Peter Carrahar

Stan Mitchell

Jennifer Southward

Michael Waldron

Thomas (Tommy) Smith

David Denys Barratt

Irena Bublik

Valentine Bannfield

Kathleen Ridgway

May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace.

We have welcomed a number of children into the church through Baptism and over 50 made their First Holy Communion from both parishes. In July we look forward to welcoming Bishop Noble to celebrate the sacrament of Confirmation with over 40 youngsters from our two parishes and nearby St Vincent's and St Ambrose's.

We also congratulate Oliver Ashby and Claire Kok Shun, Andrew O'Toole and Colleen O'Connor, and John Nish and Emma Leyden who were married here during May.

Where we are

St Peter's Church and presbytery

***16 Green Lane, Hazel Grove
Stockport SK7 4EA***

Tel 0161 483 3476

St Philip's Church

***Half Moon Lane
Offerton
Stockport SK2 5LB***

Email: admin@stpetershazeltown.org.uk

Fr Peter: petersharrocks@stpetershazeltown.org.uk

Our joint website is www.stpeterscatholic.church



NHS BIRTHDAY BASH

We celebrated in St Peter's parish the birthday of the NHS with a summer garden party in early July.

Food in the form of a barbecue, ice creams, cakes and other light refreshments went down very well

and the music included a children's disco in the parish centre. To show our appreciation for our fantastic local hospital, Stepping Hill, we raised over £700 for the Dementia Unit there.



St Philip's St Vincent de Paul (SVP) Society restarted in March 2010 at the suggestion of Fr Bernard when he was our Parish Priest.

We are a small group of eight who meet once a month at the back of church to discuss what we need to do.

Our aim is to visit the sick and housebound including those who are in care homes or hospital. We also visit and support people who live alone and just need a friendly face to have a chat.

Sometimes we help in different practical ways, shopping, ironing, cleaning, gardening, occasionally providing meals if needed and accompanying to hospital or other appointments.

One of our favourite activities is organising get togethers throughout the year. The highlight is the Christmas lunch, although the afternoon teas and hot pot lunches are very popular as well. The housebound and older parishioners really enjoy these events as it gives them the opportunity to celebrate Mass together and afterwards chat with old friends they don't get to see very often. One Mass in

***Linda Bradley** shines a light on the wonderful work that St Philip's SVP group continues to do in the Offerton community.*



with the parish and we try to involve them in our activities where possible.

They come along to our Christmas parties, help serve tea and biscuits to our elderly guests, distribute gifts (which they kindly provide) and then entertain us all with carols.

This is all very much enjoyed by everyone. There is also a gentleman who gives his time at the Christmas do to come and play his guitar and lead us all in a singsong!

After Mass at the end of each month we usually have a collection and the congregation are more than generous.

In March this year the collection was used to buy food

for the local foodbank. In the past we have supported The Wellspring Centre and helped with clothes for the refugees.

We hope to continue our work in the parish and local area and if you would like to join us, just let Fr Peter know and he'll put us in touch.

the year is always a Healing Mass and the Christmas Mass has a penitential theme.

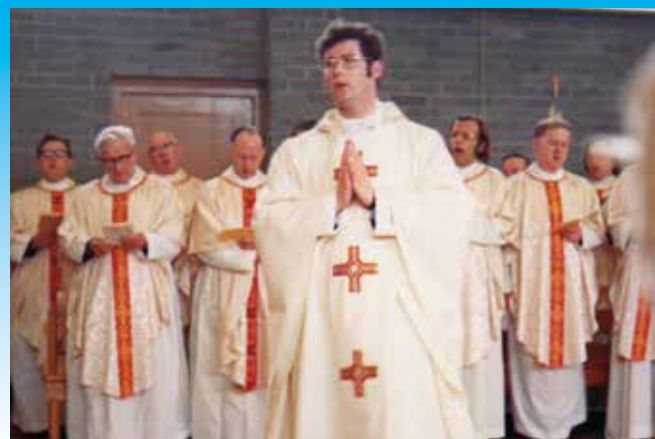
The Mini Vinnies

Since the formation of the "Mini Vinnies" at St Philip's school, the Head Teacher has been keen for them to be involved





Sprucing up the St Philip's Church signage



Fr Ivan Burke celebrating his first Mass

St Philip's celebrate 50 years

*As St Philip's prepare to celebrate their golden jubilee, **David Smith** looks back over the last 50 years when the parish was first formed.*

The first catholic church built in Stockport after the Reformation was dedicated to the Apostles Philip and James. This was later replaced by Our Lady and the Apostles in Shaw Heath.

St Philip's parish was formed from the nearby parishes of Our Lady's, St Joseph's and St Peter's in response to the building of the new Offerton estate. The initial plan was to have a new church hall dedicated to the Apostle Philip and this was opened and blessed on 16 September 1967 by Fr Tom Osbyrne, then parish priest of St Peter's, Hazel Grove and so provided a link with the old church.

The cost of the building was £12,000 and at first it was only used for Mass on a Sunday; the rest of the week it was a social centre. The first priest to take over the parish was Fr Bob Abbott who resided at St Peter's until the house at 123 Marple Road was purchased in September 1969 for him to live in. Many activities were held over the next few years to raise money to help pay off the parish debt.

The Primary School of St Philip

August 1972 saw the departure of Fr Abbott to missionary work in Rwanda. Fr Brendan Hoban was appointed his

successor and he oversaw the building work for the first phase of the Primary School of St Philip in October 1972. The doors were open to the first children the following September 1973.

Over the years the school has had further extensions creating more places for pupils. Today the school remains a credit to its Head, staff, governors, PTA and parish.

In 1975 we saw the ordination to the priesthood of the parish's one and only candidate (so far!), Fr Ivan Burke on 5 April. He celebrated his first Mass on the following day, Sunday.

In 1977 the original plan to build a new church and presbytery was still an option. Under the guidance of Fr Hoban the parish concluded that the existing church was sufficient to serve the needs of the parishioners. The parish was not large enough to support a club or meet the expense of a grander building, so the decision was to retain the existing hall as the church and build a presbytery on the side. Building work commenced that year with completion the following April. Fr Hoban was moved in July 1983

Come in number 5...

1997 saw the move of Fr Tony to the small parish of St Mary in Shifnal, and the appointment of Fr Michael Cupit as our fifth parish priest. During his tenure various alterations were made to the church, including enlargement of the porch to make it more accessible for meetings and social activities. Central heating was installed and the whole church floor and sanctuary were carpeted. Fr Michael's knowledge of scripture was immense and he would expound on it at some length(!) with

sense of mission and hospitality which exuded from him and spilt over into the parish and community. However, his stay with us was cut short, again due to poor health. He must still like it here though as he keeps appearing on the doorstep!

Looking back over the 50 years St Philip's has stuck together as a parish despite the upheavals of priests departing through ill health. However, all of them have contributed enormously to the development of the parish during their time with us

to pastures new to become parish priest of St Patrick's, Wellington in Shropshire and Fr Kevin Daley was appointed the third parish priest of St Philip's. His warm, friendly disposition was a welcome to many people but sadly ill health took its toll and he retired on these grounds in 1988. Our fourth parish priest was Fr Tony Leonard (Snr) who brought to the parish an international flavour of the church through his friend Fr Melchior Cichy from Kalvaria in Poland.

Parishioners from here made visits to Poland and young visitors from Poland were hosted by several families from the parish during their stay over here in Stockport.

every good intention to his listeners. His love of music was always evident as on several occasions his orchestra would come and perform concerts at the church.

During his time at the parish he was ably assisted by Deacon Bernard Barron who had come from Our Lady's. Bernard was always supported by his wife Margaret and both entered fully into the life of the parish after Fr Michael's retirement on health grounds and then with the incoming Fr Bernard McDermott in 2010 – our sixth parish priest. Fr Bernard, a Columban Father and local boy (Sale) had spent a lot of his priestly life on the missions in the Philippines. He brought with him that

however long or short, as have all the various individuals and groups within the parish. A great way of proclaiming the Gospel.

On September 9 this year Bishop Mark will celebrate Mass with former priests together with Fr Peter, thanking God for the last 50 years and looking forward to the future with Fr Peter at our side. "Ad multos annos".



Polish visitors to St Philip's



Fr Kevin Daly celebrating his last day at St Philip's



A toast to Fr Kevin Daly on the day of his retirement and to welcome Fr Tony Leonard to the parish



With love from Lancashire Hill *to Lima*



*Milly and Beatriz
(in the centre) with
the life saving tanks
they helped fund*

*Local Stockport man
Fr John Boles, SSC writes
from Lima, Peru where he has
worked as a Columban Father
for over 20 years.*



Who says the little people can't make a difference? Milly Hampson is eleven years old. She lives with her parents, Darren and Beatriz, in a tower block of flats overlooking the River Mersey on Lancashire Hill.

I have known her parents for over twenty years and celebrated their wedding. Stockport is my home town. Beatriz is Peruvian, and at the time of their marriage she was living in a Columban parish in Lima very near my own.

In March 2017 Milly was very upset to see how a series of massive flash floods had wreaked havoc in parts of her mother's homeland. These had been caused by an unusual fluctuation in the offshore currents of the Pacific Ocean, a phenomenon known as the "Niño Costero", or "The Child of the Coast".

She decided to do something about it. She obtained permission from the headmistress of her local Catholic Primary School of St Winifred's to hold a pyjama party - and raised the equivalent of \$250. Inspired by her example, her Mum organised a tea party for neighbours, which brought in another \$300.

They got in touch with me in Lima, and thanks to the generosity of my benefactors, I was able to double the amount to a total of \$1,100.

Not to be outdone, Dad Darren then offered to pay air fares to Peru for Milly and Beatriz, so that they could come and buy items and personally hand them over to victims of the floods.

The Columban Fathers in Peru had been working closely with the Manchester-based Loreto Sisters. They had 'adopted' one small community on the edge of Lima, called 'Las Riberas de Cajamarquilla'. Of its 23 families, eleven had seen their homes completely destroyed. The other twelve houses had been severely damaged. Roads and service lines had also been washed away.

The Loretos and Columbans had provided food and medical supplies as a first response. The government had set up tents for the homeless and installed temporary access bridges. The Sisters had secured financing for eleven pre-fabricated bungalows.

What was needed next was a supply of water tanks for the new houses. This

was because, with no running water, tankers were going round filling makeshift cisterns. The Sisters wanted to buy eleven purpose-built 1,000-litre household tanks with filters, to ensure that the affected families had access to clean drinking water.

"How much does a tank cost?" we asked Sister Miros, who was co-ordinating the relief effort. "Some \$100 each," she replied, "making a total of \$1,100". And, how much did we have? Exactly \$1,100. Perfect!

The trip to Cajamarquilla was a real adventure as many roads and bridges were still out of action, but our trusty driver Enrique finally got us there, just in time for the delivery of the tanks. The community, led by their leader Señor Zenobio, was there to meet us and we then presented the tanks to each family during a ceremony in which Milly played a starring role.

Work goes on to find funding for other needs of the community, but we'd taken a great step forward, and all due to the inspiration of an eleven-year-old schoolgirl.



It is 15 years since I have participated in an Alpha course and a lot has changed in terms of the style of the DVDs. They have recently been modernised and now feature inspiring stories and interviews from people from all sorts of different backgrounds, including:

- *Bear Grylls, world-renowned adventurer, writer and television presenter*
- *Julia Immonen, Sky Sports News presenter and double Guinness World Record Atlantic Ocean rower*
- *Ugo Monye, former English international rugby union player*
- *Jackie Pullinger, one of the world's best-known missionaries, based in Hong Kong*
- *Cardinal Christoph Schönborn, Archbishop of Vienna*
- *Father Raniero Cantalamessa, Preacher to the Papal Household*
- *Jose Henriquez Gonzalez, one of the 33 miners trapped for 69 days at the San Jose mine in Chile*
- *Alister McGrath, professor of science and religion at the University of Oxford*
- *Scott Harrison, founder of the charity, Water*

The weekly topics, such as 'Who is Jesus?' 'How can we have faith?' 'Why and how do I pray?' and 'Who is the Holy Spirit?' speak as powerfully to me now as they did 15 years ago at the beginning of my faith journey. The Alpha course is not just for those people who are new to faith; I think it has become a source of renewal for me because it is taking me back to the basics of my faith. I am constantly conflicted by the secular problems of life today, such as 'What shall I wear?' 'What unnecessary things do I need to buy?'. And so it has been a timely reminder to be pulled back to those bigger life questions such as 'Why am I here?' and 'Where am I heading?'.

What has changed?

One thing that has certainly changed this time is the setting of the Alpha course – 15 years ago I attended an Alpha course run by Cliff Metcalfe in the parish centre with Marie Gallagher, Lillian Sheehan, Philip and Anne-Marie Bailey, Sheena Nolan, Lorraine Parker



and Margaret Gresty to name but a few... That was a lovely experience of welcome within a community of committed, faithful Christians and it was just what I needed then to catapult me into parish life. This time around, I am the one trying to give the same sense of Christian welcome and

One man joined us last Sunday whom we hadn't seen since the first week and amazingly he came to St Peter's in the evening to join us for an hour of worship and adoration.

As I now reflect on my experience of The Wellspring Alpha, I realise that, whilst my intention was to live out Jesus' call for us to be a missionary church, it is, in fact, me who is being most blest by the people I encounter.

Pope Francis says in Evangelii Gaudium (# 198), "This is why I want a Church which is poor and for the poor. They have much to teach us.

Not only do they share in the sensus fidei (sense of faith), but in their difficulties, they know the suffering Christ. We need to let ourselves be evangelised by them." How true!

Everyone is welcome, so please do come if you can.

Come to The Wellspring

Alison McGarr considers what's changed in the Alpha course content since her first encounter and the effect today's course at The Wellspring in Stockport is having on her and others.

community in a setting where some of the most vulnerable members of our society are made to feel at home.

The Wellspring Alpha takes place on a Sunday afternoon from 12.30 – 2.30pm. We usually arrive in time to have lunch and a drink with everyone. One week England were playing Venezuela and there was a great atmosphere of camaraderie and laughter as the Venezuelan team missed a penalty. Some of the regulars say hello to me now as I walk in the door and, although many do not come to the session, a smile and a cup of tea is something we can all share. Each week the people from The Wellspring who watch the DVDs are different, with a just few returning. Those who do return have a powerful story to tell.

More about The Wellspring

The Wellspring is a resource centre for homeless and disadvantaged people, open 365 days every year. It is based in Stockport town centre, but supports people not just from Stockport, but from surrounding areas including Manchester, Tameside and Salford. They also engage with people from all over the country. You can read lots more about the wonderful work they do, on their website: www.thewellspring.co.uk. Our two parishes have supported The Wellspring in many ways, since it first opened its doors in 1992.

Thirty five years ago I had just met my future wife Rita and, wanting to know this girl more, I visited her at her house (which in itself was unusual at that time, a woman with a mortgage!). Whilst I was there she had a visitor, a certain Father Russell. "Quick, put the TV on and relax – it's only our parish priest!" she said. Saturday afternoon TV was racing from Doncaster and I knew nothing about horse racing!

"What do you fancy for the 3 o'clock?" asked Father Russell, on being introduced. We got on famously and I was introduced to Rita's religious world. I had not been a regular churchgoer since my early teens, having been baptised into the Anglican faith though never confirmed.

I started going with her to Mass on a Sunday and I must confess it was

initially to impress but, after some troubled work experiences, I found there a place of peace and calm after a stressful working week. The calmness that enveloped me like a cool compress was, and still is, a wonderful feeling I have never given up throughout our busy life together.

Rita's unshakeable faith and earnest prayers have supported and guided me in tough times and, last year, after all the years of regularly attending Mass, I became aware of a need, a longing to be closer to God and Jesus, to understand more about what I feel and experience at Mass. I embarked on the RCIA course.

The RCIA journey raised my awareness of scripture and Christ's ministry on earth and an understanding of the Holy Spirit. I made the connection between my experience of calmness and

sense of the Spirit within me; an understanding of what this Spirit is. It is God.

God has made me feel calm when life was rushing at a hundred miles an hour and making me feel bad; God is making me better and whole and His Holy Spirit is my conscience, compassion, love and everything that is good and is in me.

The revelation was overwhelming; I felt tears in my eyes. It all connected, made sense.

I attended all the Easter Services this year, starting on Holy Thursday. The Passion of Our Lord was sung and I found the experience very moving, and then at the Easter Vigil I became part of the Church.

I shared in the Sacraments and became one with God. My journey is complete, but not over.

*We were delighted to welcome three people into the Church this Easter. Melanie and Andy shared their experience in our last issue of Shine. Now **Peter Kress** takes us on his journey.*

My journey in faith

My Spanish experience

Newly qualified doctor, **Jessica Azmy** has recently returned from a period in Spain combining work and pleasure. She shares her experiences and reflects on what she has learned.



Having finished my medical school final exams, I was lucky enough to spend four months in Madrid doing my placements in Spanish hospitals. At the end of January, I left the comfort and familiarity of my home in Stockport to be welcomed at the airport by Diana and Fernando, much-loved members of St Peter's parish, who had moved back to Madrid the year before. I was very nervous about the move but I need not have worried as these turned out to be four unforgettable months that I will be forever grateful for.

With the help of Diana and Fernando I discovered how different but fabulous the Spanish life is! Evenings were never a time to stay in and watch television but for making plans, going out for a drink, to the theatre or simply a get together with friends and family. Weekends and bank holidays were for skiing, trips to nearby cities, the beach or fun in the park. The endless tapas bars, lively atmosphere but most of all the welcoming, friendly

and caring nature of the Spaniards made me feel right at home.

I was reminded of how St Peter's gives you a family away from Hazel Grove and how God always has a plan and will look after you in ways you least expect! Each Sunday we went to Mass and this was different from the community here at St Peter's as the Spanish attend different Masses at different churches each week, making it more difficult to meet the regulars! I visited some beautiful churches and it was nice to see many priests celebrating Mass but I did miss the familiarity of St Peter's parish.

Aside from all the fun I did do some 'work' in hospital too!

I had 4-week placements in gastroenterology (looking after patients with stomach and bowel problems), neurology (patients with brain injuries and illnesses affecting their brain and nerves), general medicine and

paediatrics in Madrid's main children's hospital, which had a lovely chapel where Mass was held each day.

The best thing was observing the differences between the Spanish and UK doctors and learning a different way to do things. Doctors in Spain love what they do, form close relationships with patients and do whatever it takes to help. They are less stressed and much more relaxed (this may have something to do with the working hours which are from 8am-3pm!). Seeing happy doctors was refreshing and a contrast to the NHS.

What I learned

Importantly it reminded me of why I wanted to become a doctor. There is something really special about looking after and treating patients and it reminded me that I should not let the endless exams, bureaucracy and paperwork put me off as I prepare for starting work as a junior doctor at Stepping Hill this August!

The most important lesson this experience has taught me is to worry less, enjoy more and take the opportunities that God gives us, because they can be simply amazing! I am really grateful to Diana and Fernando for showing me their Spanish way of life and I am looking forward to them visiting us soon.



Left to right: Chaplain of St. Simon's, Fr Pat O'Brien, Ted Nestor, Head of St Peter's with his wife Babs, Gerry Clarke new Head of St Simon's, Maria Fitzgerald, Deputy Head of St Peter's, Mrs Mary Spencer new teacher at St Simon's (Inset photo Fr Tom Osbyrne.)

The birth of St Simon's school

The idea of a second parish primary school, first decided over half a century ago(!), grew out of the very considerable then overcrowding at St Peter's primary school. The long-time head there was Mr Ted Nestor.

The then parish priest, Fr Tom Osbyrne, was the driving force behind the idea of a new school to serve all parts of the parish. He gave the school's name, St Simon's, the same patron saint as the parish: Simon Peter the fisherman and disciple. He thus thoughtfully preserved the connection with both the church and the existing school of St Peter's. Fr Osbyrne was also much taken with the concept of the new school. In design and outlook it reflected accumulated contemporary thinking about the way children learn and develop. It also represented a unique educational and pastoral challenge to him and the new appointed staff. He very much saw it as his personal project and he deserves considerable praise for having seen the new school through its many complex stages to final completion.

Sadly, Fr Osbyrne was not to live long enough to see children in the new school. He was chairman of the governors who appointed me as the new head teacher, but was by then very ill. I can remember his pleasure

Gerry Clarke was the first head teacher of one of our two parish primary schools. St Simon's. He looks back fondly at its development.

and enthusiasm whilst sitting in a large fireside chair in the presbytery, barely able to speak, and talking of the school's future. He died just a week or so before our doors opened to the first group of children.

The building plans for St Simon's were not completed in their entirety; that happily was to come later.

Especially in recent years, the school has enjoyed a considerable government grant that was to update it to an attractive, modern building and secure site. Last year, the governors appointed a new enthusiastic head teacher, Mrs Rachel Crisp, so ensuring St Simon's continuing development. No institution can stand still!

St Simon's Mission Statement

- + Whatever we do at St Simon's Catholic Primary School, we do for the glory of God.
- + We are part of St Peter's Parish Community.
- + We provide a Catholic education with Christ at the heart of all we do.
- + We recognise, respect, appreciate and affirm the uniqueness of each person created in the image and likeness of God.
- + We welcome those in need and seek to provide an environment in which they will thrive.
- + The education we offer will bring fullness of life.
- + We say sorry, forgive and support each other when things go wrong, as Jesus taught us.

At the beginning of June, we went to the Big Church Day Out at Capesthorpe Hall with loads of people from our parish as well as friends from other local parishes. This was my first time at something like Big Church Day Out so I really didn't know what to expect.

The first thing was that it was just like a festival and a fairground all mixed into one – great for mums and dads, teenagers and children too! There was a huge field full of campers, cars and cowpats right next to a beautiful stately home. So a pretty nice setting, even if you had to dodge the cowpats!

Before we left the camping area, we got into the festival spirit and got glittered up and I think some people are still trying to wash the glitter from duvets, pillow cases and make up brushes two weeks later!!

Once you entered into the main area, there was loads to do for children, a big wheel, a carousel, archery, bouncy castles, bike riding, climbing walls and a tent with activities for smaller children too.

The thing I loved most was listening to contemporary Christian music, such as Rend Collective, Matt Maher and

Madeleine McGarr, 14, shares her experience of a local Christian music festival held near Macclesfield.

The Abrams. It was great to be able to sing worship songs in such a lovely atmosphere surrounded by my family and friends.

The other great thing about the Big Church Day Out was the food... Jerk chicken, churros dipped in chocolate, burgers, chips, free Tango, Mr Whippy

ice cream, fish and chips and Costa Coffee for mum and dad!

But the thing I will remember most is that there were thousands of people there, all having a great time praising and worshipping God and the atmosphere was amazing. It really was a Big Church Day Out!!!

*... and Madeleine's sister, **Georgina McGarr, aged 11, offers her account of the day.***

At Big Church Day Out I enjoyed going on some of the rides, getting free Tango and listening to the music. I also loved watching Dad on the main stage in the Best Beard Competition! He didn't win, but he did get a big cheer from me.

The music was really powerful and I was touched by the words in the songs. In the evening, I went to the worship session and I was really moved, I was really into it! I was singing and dancing and God definitely spoke to me that night! It was the best weekend ever.



The Big Church Day Out

A date for your 2018 diaries

The next Big Church Day Out will be held on 1 and 2 June 2018, so make a note now not to miss it next year. Check out their website for more info: www.bigchurchdayout.com



What exactly is Fairtrade?

Most of us have heard of Fairtrade; we've seen the symbol on tea, coffee, chocolate, bananas and even wine. However, you may not be aware that cotton, flowers, gold, sugar and many more products can be Fairtrade. In 2013 there were over 4,000 products available in the UK.

The Fairtrade Foundation was established in 1992 by a number of charities working in the Developing World, including CAFOD and Oxfam, alongside the World Development Movement. The first product on the shelves was CafeDirect, initially sold only by the Co-op. Now, one in three bananas is sold as Fairtrade, and all major UK supermarkets and many smaller and online retailers stock Fairtrade products. They are not exclusive to Britain; Fairtrade products are sold in over 130 countries worldwide.

The main purpose of the Fairtrade organisation is, as you probably know, to pay producers a fair price, particularly in the developing world. Their vision is to give producers "secure and sustainable livelihoods" and to have a say in their own future. The organisation sets standards to secure workers' rights and fairer trade deals and to protect them from market fluctuations.

Companies who trade as Fairtrade have to be licenced to use the Fairtrade mark on specific products, following internationally agreed standards. They agree to pay sustainable prices, which must never fall below the market price for the goods that they buy and sell. Furthermore, they have to commit to

Amanda Welch reminds us that St Peter's is a Fairtrade parish and explains what that means and how it will help to improve the lives of others.

eliminating forced labour and child labour. This means children under 15 are not allowed to work for Fairtrade organisations, and on family-run farms, where children are often expected to help, this must be under strict conditions and age-appropriate.

The Fairtrade premium

What makes the Fairtrade foundation unique is the Fairtrade premium. Apart from the minimum price paid to producers, which covers the cost of sustainable production of that product in that region, an additional sum of

money is paid into a communal fund for workers and farmers to use to improve the lives of their community, which then makes a democratic decision on where

to spend the money. This could be on schooling, hospitals, or infrastructure such as building roads and bridges.

Fairtrade is also environmentally friendly. In Bolivia, they promote sustainability by dealing with environmental problems, such as helping Bolivian coffee farmers to deal with plant diseases linked by climate change, which safeguards their livelihoods.

In West Africa and India, where Fairtrade cotton is grown, efficient water usage is promoted, and dangerous chemicals and modified cotton seeds are banned. A large percentage of Fairtrade cotton is organic-certified too.

In 2013-14, Fairtrade farmers sold 19,300 tonnes of cotton and received more than 1 million Euros in Fairtrade premium payments, of which just under half was spent on community projects and about a third to supply direct services such as training and tools to cotton farmers.

What does it mean to be a Fairtrade parish?

As a Fairtrade parish, St Peter's has committed to the following:

- use Fairtrade tea and coffee after services and for all meetings for which we have responsibility
- move forward by using other Fairtrade products such as sugar, biscuits and fruit
- promote Fairtrade during Fairtrade Fortnight and during the year through events, worship and other activities whenever possible

Setting the example as a Fairtrade Parish, we endeavour to encourage others to buy any Fairtrade products where they see the logo.

Fairtrade is a charity that is working hard worldwide to improve the lives of those less well off. If you want to find out more, go to their website: www.fairtrade.org.uk. In the meantime, look for the logo next time you go shopping!



Dr Johnson said: "A man, Sir, should keep his friendship in constant repair." If this is true of our human relationships, how much more true is it of our relationship with God?

We deepen our friendship with God through the Mass, the sacraments, our daily devotions, prayer, spiritual reading, Bible reading and numerous other ways. Indeed, the ways are endless. However, as in human relationships, we need now and again to take time apart to reflect on how things are going (as for example was offered by the recent Marriage Course in the parish which many found to be a good spring-cleaning exercise!) so too we need time to grow and reinvigorate our friendship with God.

At one time we would take ourselves off to a retreat house in a quiet rural region and spend some time in prayer and silence. However, in our busy lives such a luxury can be well nigh impossible to achieve. Apart from the time factor there is the added expense; such places that exist now can be quite expensive. There is also the added problem of distance as retreat houses can be situated in remote places.

There is another way and that is instead of you going on retreat, the retreat comes to you – in a parish setting. This we call A Week of Guided Prayer and some of you have already experienced this here in St Peter's.

How to reinvigorate your friendship

Mike O'Malley invites you to try a new kind of retreat experience.

It's a simple format

The week usually begins on a Sunday afternoon in the parish centre with a short introductory session where the 'pilgrims' meet the team and their fellow pilgrims and are assigned a guide for the week. The week comes to a close on the following Saturday morning with a short group service.

The guide is a person with training in this form of retreat experience. The guide will suggest and provide material for each prayer session. It is recommended that you spend 20 to 30 minutes in each prayer session at home and then meet your guide to reflect together on how you're getting on. The meeting with your guide usually lasts half an hour and takes place at a pre-arranged time either in the parish or at some other venue. 20 to 30 minutes' daily prayer might seem to

be somewhat daunting, but in fact most people find that the time goes by rather quickly and indeed wish it were longer! Others might think that meeting with the guide and talking about their prayer experience would be something they could never do. In fact, most pilgrims take to it very well and begin to look forward to the encounter.

The fruits of a week of guided prayer are of great benefit to those who undertake it and one's friendship with God, one's self and one's neighbour is greatly enriched. I hope you'll try it next time the opportunity arises. We don't as yet have a date for the next opportunity in our parishes, but I'll keep you posted.

If you would be interested in such a week or would like to hear more, contact Mike on 0161 483 8296

The gospel and homily time at Mass are usually “wriggle time” for most children as the words float over their heads and they are distracted, so thank goodness for those kind adults who take the children away and leave the rest of the congregation to listen and pray quietly. BUT, this is not the true reason for the Children’s liturgy group. The kind adults (catechists) take the children out for another reason: to explain the gospel to them in a way that they can understand and make it relevant to their world.

Here at St Peter’s, we are lucky to have a strong, dedicated team of catechists and can split the children up into four age groups ranging from pre-school to lower secondary, so that the gospel experience is more relevant to their age. Our catechists are not all trained teachers, far from it. But they all have the desire to pass the message of the gospel on to the children. We also have a team of Support Leaders to back us up, so that there are always two DBS-checked adults with each group, in line with the Diocese Child Protection Policy.

Our sessions follow the pattern of the first part of the Mass, with the Penitential Rite and the Gloria, but at the children’s level, with an opportunity for them to participate with their thoughts and feelings. Next, there is an introduction to the theme of the gospel, with any background information that will make the gospel more understandable, always remembering that the children only have a few

The children do it *their way*

Janice Ormerod sheds light on how the Children’s Liturgy of the Word is organised and delivered each week at our 10am Sunday Mass at St Peter’s.



The children usually burst back into church after the Bidding Prayers and embarrass the catechists by their often hilarious answers to the priest’s questions, but they must enjoy the group because they come back the next week.

The children are not the only ones to benefit from our sessions. Most of our catechists agree that, by thinking about the gospel before their session and trying to break it down into something that the children can understand, they themselves begin to understand and see the gospel in a new light.

Each catechist brings to the session something different and it is good for the children to experience different ideas and to have adults sharing these ideas with them.

Most of the congregation perhaps, are only aware of the Children’s Liturgy team on Christmas Day and Easter Sunday when the children help to present the liturgy of the Word for those special days. But this is only the tip of the iceberg, as the sessions are there for the children every week with a lot of preparation by the catechists who are doing a great job in passing on the teachings of Jesus and so investing in the future of the parish and the church.

If you are interested in helping us, please contact Janice on 0161 449 5840. If you’d like to include your children, simply come on Sunday at 10am and bring them to join the other children at the start of Mass.

years’ experience of life and things that we take for granted are often new to them and need to be explained.

This is another chance for the children to ask questions and share thoughts. Then follows the reading of the gospel, often in simple word with pauses for

more explanations if necessary. After the gospel, the children are led to reflect on what the gospel is telling them and how that can be translated into their lives during the following week.

The final activity, often colouring a picture or a puzzle, helps to reinforce the message of the gospel and is something that the children can take away to show their parents and may serve as a reminder during the coming week. What a lot is crammed into just 20-25 minutes – no wonder the catechists don’t object too much if the homily overruns!



Overheard at St Peter’s gates – no, not the pearly gates, St Peter’s school gates...

“Would you like to go for a meal one evening?”

“Oh yes! That’s a good idea.”

“Fine. We can meet in the church car park at 6pm and walk across.”

“Hey, wait a minute, the pizzeria doesn’t open till 7.”

“I know, but by the time we’ve cleaned the church, it will be open.”

And that is how one team started about 20 years ago and they’ve been eating out, sampling different cuisines every six weeks ever since – and cleaning the church beforehand. Their priority is still sustenance so on that team, one member who comes finds her first job is to brew up for the rest of the team!

Continuing the food theme, the Christmas meal (sometimes not till Easter) for all six teams is an excellent time to chat and get to know more people. We’re mostly known as the holy dusters, though other nicknames have also been used, we understand, ha ha. The main thing is that we keep St Peter’s church bright and shining.

Bright ideas



The fun-loving approach of holy dusters is evident by the decorations of one of their Christmas trees at church

The cleaning teams are neither ageist nor sexist. From toddlers to octogenarians, all are welcome. There have been four octogenarians over the years and currently one is still ‘scrubbing away’. A good job for the youngsters is to get them to find the chewing gum under the benches. They leave a newsletter there and Mum or Grandma will come after and scrape off the offending item.

Currently there are four or five men on our teams and each has different reasons for volunteering. One remained on the team after he had stepped in to cover when his wife was ill. Another came to help when his wife’s team was short-handed and the third may have something to do with a child who went home and told his mother that he had seen God’s wife cleaning the church. We’re not sure if he is still looking for God’s wife or just a wife...

The last one answered a cry for help when there was a shortage one weekend. He obviously told his wife how much he enjoyed it because she then joined for a different day.

It’s well known that housework, with all the bending and stretching, is good for keeping fit. However, it seemed a bit much to practise swimming strokes on a chair. It turned out this particular person had not quite fully recovered from her hip operation and couldn’t yet bend properly to clean the brass plates under the doors. Such dedication!

No experience is needed. All you really need is just a brush, a vacuum cleaner or a duster in your hand and off you go!! If you’re tempted to get involved and become a ‘holy duster’, ring Margaret King in the first instance on 0161 483 4584.

St James' Catholic High School was recently visited by diocesan and Ofsted inspection teams and we are delighted with the contents of both reports.

The diocesan inspection

The diocesan inspection in April recognised us as an “outstanding Catholic school”. It also commented on us being a school that ‘lives its mission statement’ and that “much of this comes from the key leaders in the school embracing the Catholic ethos and letting it SHINE for everyone to see and give the glory to God.”

The Inspector, who thoroughly enjoyed his time at the school, commented on our young people’s contribution to the ethos of our school: “Pupils understand the vision and values of the school and are very supportive of them.” He also saw strong and clear evidence of the importance placed on spirituality and worship:

Ofsted inspectors:
Pupils readily respond to leaders’ high expectations evident in the ‘SHINE’ ethos. As a result, they speak politely, have respect, follow instructions, never say never and engage positively in all that they do

“There is unequivocal and explicit evidence that the Catholic mission of the school is a priority, along with opportunities for spiritual and moral development and collective worship... Collective worship, in its many forms, is central to the daily life of the school and forms a key part of every school celebration.”

The Ofsted inspection

We were visited by the Ofsted inspection team in March and they judged the two most important areas of a school, the ‘personal development



Thomas Coleing who is a member of our parish receives the ‘Spirit of St James’ award, at the Lower School Presentation Evening

“Pupils **SHINE** at this school”

St James’ Catholic High School in Cheadle Hulme is keen to share the contents of the latest diocesan and Ofsted inspection reports... with good reason!

and welfare’ and the ‘outcomes of pupils’, as outstanding. Overall the school was judged as good with outstanding features, and as you will be able to see from the report, the inspectors were more than impressed with what they saw, particularly with regard to the pupils and their behaviour. In fact, when giving feedback to the school’s governors, Local Authority and diocesan representatives, the HMI said, **“The conduct of pupils in this school, the way they interact with each other and adults, is impeccable – in fact, it is the best I have ever seen.”**

We were particularly pleased with the opening statement in the report: “Pupils shine at this school because they benefit enormously from being part of the ‘St James family’, a supportive and caring community. They are happy and safe in school.”

Ofsted inspectors:
Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning, they are curious and want to achieve their best

Headteacher, Mr Tim Beesley wrote to parents saying, “Enabling our young people to ‘shine’ has clearly been our vision here at St James’ over the last five years, and it is lovely to see this recognised so explicitly... I am incredibly proud of our students, staff, governors and other stakeholders who have worked hard to secure this very positive judgement.”

At the final meeting, when the inspectors were discussing the

School report	
St James’ Catholic High School St James Way, Cheadle Hulme, Cheadle, Cheshire SK8 6PZ	
Inspection dates 22–23 March 2017	
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

different judgements and the HMI proposed an ‘outstanding’ judgement for ‘personal development and welfare’, one of the inspectors replied, “If this school isn’t, then I don’t know a school that is.” We think that this comment, along with the overwhelmingly positive findings in the report, is something that everyone associated with St James’ should be really proud of.

Ofsted inspectors:
Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school



Ofsted inspectors:
Pupils work exceptionally well together

Ofsted inspectors:
Staff are proud to be a member of staff at this school



Ofsted inspectors:
Pupils know what it means to be ‘ready to learn’



Ofsted inspectors:
Pupils, including the most able, are challenged by their work



Ofsted inspectors:
Progress overall is much better than that of similar-ability pupils nationally



Ofsted inspectors:
Parents have highly positive views of the school

Both of these highly positive inspection reports can be found on the school’s website:
www.stjamescatholichighschool.org.uk/key-information/inspection-reports/



At the beginning of April this year, a number of us from the parish went along to the Local Pastoral Area (LPA) session on 'Lay Led Funerals' held at St Vincent's, Bramhall. Maureen Knight and Maureen O'Brien from the department of Pastoral Formation in the Archdiocese of Liverpool talked to us about the lay ministry that seems to be growing around funerals in Liverpool. The session was quite a surprising mixture of practical advice, coupled with the energy and joy that the two ladies seemed to convey to us about their involvement in this ministry.

Maureen explained how this ministry began. A priest was struggling to cope with sometimes up to seven funerals a week. From this initial challenge, a small group of priests and people met to discuss the situation and subsequently 22 people were commissioned by the then Archbishop, Patrick Kelly, to be lay ministers to assist with funerals. Maureen stated that the changes that have taken place have helped 'the care of the bereaved become the responsibility of the whole community.'

In many parts of the world where populations are so great and priests few and where often funerals take place so quickly after death, it has been the custom for many years for the laity to undertake funerals and comfort the bereaved.

Maureen asked us to recall the corporal acts of mercy which Pope Francis has recently reminded us of: to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, welcome the stranger, heal the sick, visit the

Helping hand for city priests is a Godsend

Rachel McKay was one of a number of people from St Peter's who went to learn more about a recent development in the care of the bereaved. Here's what she learnt about lay led funerals and the ministry of consolation.

imprisoned, and bury the dead. I hadn't really thought about the reality of that before.

Our Christian responsibility

In the Catholic Church the responsibility for the ministry of consolation rests with the believing community, which heeds the words and example of the Lord Jesus: "Blessed are they who mourn; they shall be consoled" (Matthew 5:3). We're all called as Christians to share in some way in this ministry – we all have a part to play in looking after the bereaved. Apparently that's why funeral Masses often take place at the same time as our weekday Mass so that, as a community, we can actively participate in the funeral rites, whether we know the person or not.

Liverpool diocese now runs a two day course for lay people who have been asked by their parish priest

to serve the community by leading funeral services when there is no priest or deacon available, or when it is requested by the family for a lay person to lead a particular service. Continuing support and training is provided to ensure that the service they provide is 'of the best quality'. It was said that this ministry should not be seen as 'second-class' in any way. It seems to be a way in which, in times of need, we can fulfil our Christian responsibility to support the bereaved and bury the dead.

In Liverpool, Lay Funeral Ministers often preside at Rites of Committal at the graveside or crematoria following a Requiem Mass celebrated by the priest. They will also preside at services in church if required. Families can always have a priest or deacon conduct their service if that is their wish – it might just mean waiting a bit longer.

Flourishing practical support

What seems to have sprung up from the initial cry for help from that priest in Liverpool is a whole new flourishing lay involvement in the care of the bereaved. Teams have grown up in parishes supporting people before, during and after the funeral in whatever practical way is needed. It might involve anything from helping a family choose readings for the funeral Mass, helping with the order of service, being a source for practical support and advice, to being available to lead a service to meet the needs of a family.

A variety of gifts

A parish priest wrote: "Our funeral team has transformed the way our parish cares for bereaved families. Where I used to do my best to meet their needs, now the team brings a variety of gifts to this vital and sensitive task, making real the vision of the Order of Christian Funerals that the ministry of consolation is the responsibility of the whole Christian community."

A bereaved family member wrote: "On behalf of my family, thank you so much for the lovely service for our lovely sister. Everyone has commented on how fantastic it was. You made the service so personal to us all and it gave us comfort as we said goodbye to such a special person in our lives. Thank you. I'm so lucky to have you and your team in my life."

If you'd like to know more or if you're interested in being involved in this ministry have a chat with Fr Peter.

Churches Together *get-together*

Hazel Grove Churches Together has been active for over 40 years and involves Christians from many denominations in the area. **Sophie Hourihan** is one of a number of parishioners from St Peter's who is currently involved in the excellent Sunday Lunch project.

My Mom and I have been blessed enough to join in on this fabulous ecumenical project that has been running for over 40 years, providing Sunday lunches for elderly people in the area. There are seven ecumenical teams, each of whom provides a lunch twice a year, once in the summer months and another in winter months. We get to cook and serve Sunday lunch to some incredible people who may have otherwise spent the day alone.

(Each team invites a number of guests to a Sunday lunch and transports them to and from Hazel Grove Methodist Church on Wesley Street, where inspiration for the project first originated. The kitchens there are fitted with industrial-style appliances to facilitate catering en masse.)

The highlight of each year for me so far is the summer party that is held in our parish centre. This year, in early June, we welcomed about 70 guests this year to afternoon tea and entertainment.



The organisation of the summer party is incredible and everyone is given a task to carry out: either making sandwiches, cakes or tea, arranging and setting the tables, transporting people or moving the piano into the main hall. The attendees are delightful and the entertainment that is put on for the afternoon is spectacular.

This year we had a surprise entertainer, Rebecca Hourihan who is in year 2 at St Peter's primary school. She managed to play 'Twinkle Twinkle little star' without fault on her violin. We also had the delightful Sunday lunch team deliver a 'Snow White' skit to us and St Peter's junior choir, led by Eileen Rigg, gave another incredible performance. This is a great initiative and I really enjoy being involved. We are always on the lookout for people to join who are able to transport people to the lunches and the annual summer party. Please contact Doreen Sykes on 0161 483 2857, if you would like to know more about this.





Mary's corner

+ Sit down in a quiet place.

+ Take some time. Don't rush.

+ Enjoy reading this summer reflection by Mary Hardiman, probably more than once.

Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well

From John 4:1-26 Good News Translation (GNT)

The Pharisees heard that Jesus was winning and baptising more disciples than John. So when Jesus heard what was being said, he left Judea and went back to Galilee; on his way there he had to go through Samaria. In Samaria he came to a town named Sychar, which was not far from the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by the trip, sat down by the well. It was about noon.

A Samaritan woman came to draw some water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink of water." (His disciples had gone into town to buy food.) The woman answered, "You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan – so how can you ask me for a drink?" (Jews will not use the same cups and bowls that Samaritans use.)

Jesus answered, "If you only knew what God gives and who it is that is asking you for a drink, you would ask him, and he would give you life-giving water."

"Sir," the woman said, "you don't have a bucket, and the well is deep. Where would you get that life-giving water? It was our ancestor Jacob who gave us this well; he and his children and his flocks all drank from it. You don't claim to be greater than Jacob, do you?"

Jesus answered, "Those who drink this water will get thirsty again, but those who drink the water that I will give them will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give them will become in them a spring which will provide them with

life-giving water and give them eternal life."

"Sir," the woman said, "give me that water! Then I will never be thirsty again, nor will I have to come here to draw water."

"Go and call your husband," Jesus told her, "and come back." "I don't have a husband," she answered.

Jesus replied, "You are right when you say you don't have a husband. You have been married to five men, and the man you live with now is not really your husband. You have told me the truth."

"I see you are a prophet, sir," the woman said. "My Samaritan ancestors worshipped God on this mountain, but you Jews say that Jerusalem is the place where we should worship God."

Jesus said to her, "Believe me, woman, the time will come when people will not worship the Father either on this mountain or in Jerusalem. You Samaritans do not really know whom you worship; but we Jews know whom we worship, because it is from the Jews that salvation comes. But the time is coming and is already here, when by the power of God's Spirit people will worship the Father as he really is, offering him the true worship that he wants. God is Spirit, and only by the power of his Spirit can people worship him as he really is."

The woman said to him, "I know that the Messiah will come, and when he comes, he will tell us everything." Jesus answered, "I am he, I who am talking with you."

I have chosen this reading because it shows Jesus on a journey. Maybe this summer you will be going somewhere or having guests come to stay with you. Read on – there may be something here for you to consider.

John tells us that, in travelling from Judaea to Galilee, Jesus HAD to go through Samaria. Did he really? You see, in those days the Jews and the Samaritans hated one another and so most Jews would have taken the scenic route to avoid Samaria, rather than the direct one through it.

So why does Jesus' journey break with convention? Well, I believe he had what I call a 'divine appointment', written in God's calendar at the beginning of time.

If you're visiting somewhere this summer it may be an idea to think about the journey and why you're using a particular route. Maybe there is something God wants to reveal to you whilst you travel. Ask Him.

At the start of this story we see quite clearly the humanity of Jesus; hot, sweaty, tired, hungry and thirsty, sitting alone by a well in the scorching heat of the day, a time when nobody would be about, a time this Samaritan woman knew well. Who was she? What did she look like? What was her name? How did she approach the well? Was she bold and audacious? Or was she trembling, afraid, uncertain?

Despite a live-in lover at home, this woman is rejected, lost and lonely, with a string of failed relationships behind her. No wonder she came to draw water when nobody was around; no wonder she avoided social contact, the stares, the muttering, the gossip, the silent or vocal hostility. No wonder.

And it's no surprise to me that Jesus has made this journey especially for her – he's walked this long, hot, dusty road to seek her out and restore her

dignity as a child of God. And not just that, he has a message for the whole of this community and beyond.

Who will you meet on your journey? How many strangers will you encounter? And how will you greet them? Maybe God has something He wants you to say. Ask Him.

I love the way Jesus opens the dialogue with her. You see she is not just a Samaritan, but a Samaritan woman, the lowest of the low. And yet here the Son of God, Yahweh, I AM, approaches her as a thirsty beggar. Just imagine the scene: Jesus is sitting and she is standing. He greets her from a position of inferiority, both physically and psychologically, tacitly acknowledging their equality before God. And he utters six simple words – 'give me a drink of water'.

Jesus is the master psychologist! He is so clever. I love too the way he draws her into this dialogue with his cavalier disregard for social niceties! 'You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan so how can you ask me for a drink?' She's yet to understand that Jesus can and will do whatever he wants!

Jesus' lament comes straight from the heart – 'if only you knew what God gives'. These words have travelled across the centuries and speak as loudly to us today as they did then. If only WE knew what God gives us in every heartbeat – His love, His guidance, His presence; His is the hand that keeps on giving, grace upon grace upon grace.

Is there something God wants to give you on your journey? Ask Him.

Her response: 'Sir, you have no bucket and the well is deep'. You know, we make God so very small. We limit Him to the confines of our own humanity. God has no need of a bucket!

But Jesus is never put off by our small mindedness. He keeps the channels of communication open. 'Whoever drinks this water will be thirsty again' means that if we continue to do things as we've always done them, nothing will change. What Jesus is offering her are the waters of life that will quench her thirst for eternity. And she wants it; she's tired of rejection, of mistrust and enmity.

But first she has to acknowledge her brokenness. 'Go and call your husband'. In these five words Jesus truly is the wonder counsellor. See how gently and lovingly he touches this woman's inner wound and liberates her from it. 'I have no husband' is her lament, her confession, expressing in it all the loneliness and lack of self respect she owns. With Jesus there are no reproaches, no judgement, just tenderness and love.

Is there something from your journey through life that needs God's mercy? Ask Him.

How long had she been waiting for this moment? How must it have felt for her to look into the eyes of love? In this short, unexpected dialogue in the ordinary humdrum of her life, this nameless, despised and rejected Samaritan woman has been transformed into a vessel of God's grace, ready to evangelise not only her own community but other communities throughout time and space and empowering us to do the same.

Is there something that God wants you to tell others? Ask Him.

No matter who we are, what we have done or how others see us, each of us is precious to God. He will always come and find us whether we ask Him to or not.

Ask anyway – it's worth it!

Bon voyage!



Easter at St Peter's

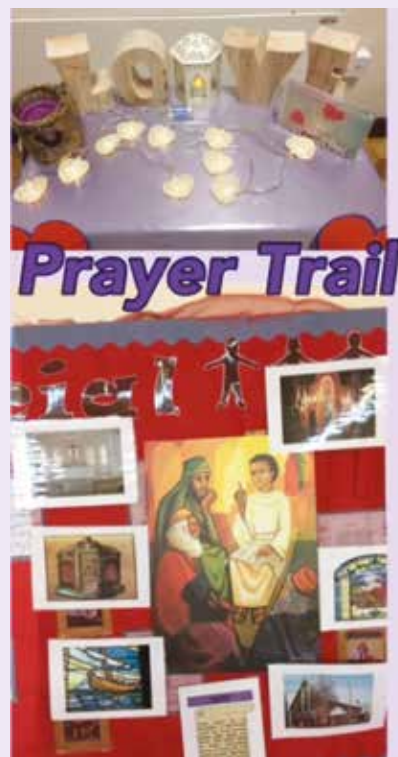
Peter Whittam was one of so many parishioners who found the services at our church over the Easter weekend very enriching, moving and helpful. He leads us here in our thanks to the young people for their particularly powerful contribution.

What a wonderful Easter Triduum we enjoyed this year. All the services were outstanding.

I was particularly impressed by The Way of the Cross presented by the young people on Good Friday morning. I had never thought about looking through Mary's eyes following her Son along the way to His crucifixion.

It was most moving and I have to admit that it brought tears to my eyes more than once. All the young people taking part were great and I would give the readers and solo singers top marks. Congratulations to all the cast and to Julie Williams who was responsible for producing it once more.

If you would like to see this Way of the Cross, just go to the webcam page of our parish website: <http://stpeterscatholic.church/webcam/> and select Recordings. Then from the list choose 14 April, Good Friday Way of the Cross presented by Young People of the Parish 11:00 14-04-2017. Select the ► in the centre of the page and the recording will play.



Lenten Trail at **St Simon's** school

Our Lenten Trail consists of six zones: each zone concentrates on different aspects of Jesus' ministry, such as Jesus is Love, Jesus is healing the sick, Jesus is teaching in the Temple, Jesus has died for us.

Each zone includes pictures, readings from the Gospel, meditation and practical activities which impact our everyday lives.

The Lenten Trail is led by our Mini Vinnie's group. Here are a few of their testimonies.

"This year I have the privilege of being responsible for a zone in the Lenten Trail. I have enjoyed reaching out to my fellow school friends and the rest of the school. It was a great way to share what Lent is all about."

Jessica

Each year during Lent, **St Simon's Catholic Primary School** prepares a Lenten Trail for all classes. Here's what it's about and some reactions from pupils.

"This year I was asked to lead a zone as part of the Lenten Trail. My zone was about Jesus in the Temple. I had to welcome the group in and talk to them about the pictures they could see. Then we read a Gospel reading and after that I gave them a piece of paper each to write about how to behave in church. My favourite part was when the little children came in and decorated angels. I liked to share my responsibility with Lily because it was more enjoyable to share the experience with a friend."

"This year I was asked to take part in the Lenten Trail and I loved every minute of it! My favourite part was sharing the Word of Our Lord with other children, listening to their opinions and sharing my own views. In addition, I enjoyed putting my own spin on the words that I was saying when I was trying to explain my zone in the most understandable way."

Emma



It was Monday morning and I arrived at school for 7.30am. Everyone got on the coach and we had a long journey to York Minster. I was sat with Mia and we played card games and talked. We arrived at the Minster and walked to the front entrance.

The whole class separated into two groups and went on a tour around the cathedral. The tour was so interesting and I learned quite a lot. I had already been there before with my family, but hadn't understood what everything symbolised, but now I understand everything!

After York Minster, we set off on our journey again, but stopped at Beck Isle Museum on the way. We learned about Victorian games like tiddlywinks and snakes and ladders, then pretended to be pupils in a Victorian school - it was quite scary!

My favourite activities from the whole week were fossil hunting and rock pooling at Robin Hood's Bay. Our class split into two groups, and my group hunted for fossils first: we all found loads. During rock pooling, we all caught creatures such as crabs and flat fish, but don't worry, we let them go again without harming them!



Our trip to **Whitby**

*In May, the **Year 6 children from St Peter's primary school** travelled to Whitby for five days of learning and fun in the sun. On their return, they recorded the events of the week and have chosen to share some of their memories. Enjoy!*

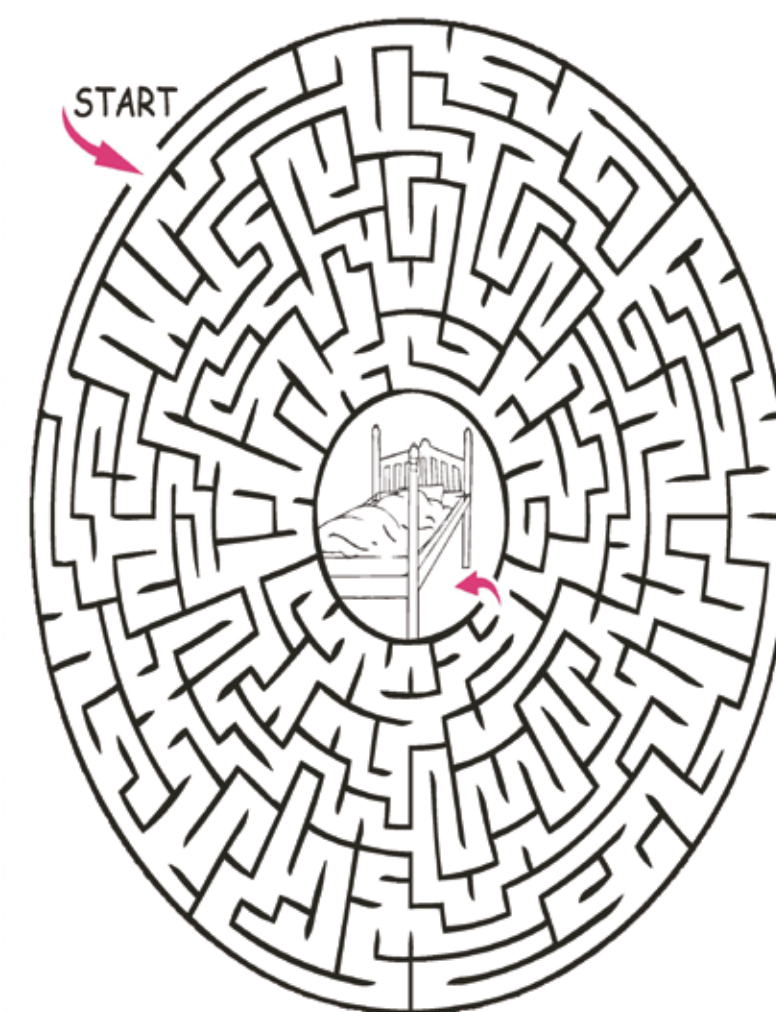
On Wednesday afternoon, we walked up the 199 steps to St Mary's church. We looked around and discovered many new things, like how people used to worship facing different ways, and that the richer people had their own

boxes to sit inside, with cushioned chairs. We had a great time at Whitby, and enjoyed many more activities, like playing at Mini Monsterz, riding the roller coasters at Flamingo Land and tasting the delicious fish and chips!

KIDS



Tommy is trying to catch a fish. But there aren't any fish in the water. Can you see where five little fish are hiding?



ST PETER'S ACCOUNTS

ST PETER'S HAZEL GROVE RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS YEAR to 31st MARCH 2017			
RECEIPTS			
Offeratories			
Envelopes	£ 40,365.00		
Standing orders	£ 32,809.00		
Loose Plate	£ 30,255.00		
Total		103429.00	
Donations	£ 1,710.00		
Wall Boxes	£ 4,262.00		
Social Income	£ 1,066.00		
Rents	24821.00		
Legacies	2000.00		
Chaplaincies	1374.00		
Others	45.00	35278.00	
Total Parish Income		138707.00	
Diocesan Collections	4024.00		
Non Diocesan	10893.00		
Parish Trips etc	6512.00		
Total Non Parish		21429.00	
TOTAL RECEIPTS		160136.00	

PAYMENTS			
Priest Allowance	9217.00		
Priests car Allowance	1255.00		
Retreats etc.	295.00		
Mass Stipends	115.00		
Total Clergy		10882.00	
Wages &NHI	19496.00		
Housekeeping	5565.00		
Total Housekeeping		25061.00	
Gas & Electricity	6486.00		
Council Tax & Water	3795.00		
Telephone	997.00		
Insurance	1478.00		
Household Furnishings	1149.00		
Repairs & Maintenance	14259.00		
Total Premises		28164.00	
Altar Exps	13435.00		
Stationery Postage	3050.00		
Office & IT equipment	199.00		
Sundry Expenses	200.00		
Wall Boxes	3622.00		
Social Expenses	14438.00		
Catechetical	4953.00		
Total Gen. Expenses		39897.00	
Assessment	24908.00		
Collections			
Diocesan Collections	3959.00		
Other Collections	11557.00		
Trips etc	2929.00		
Total Other Payments		43353.00	
TOTAL PAYMENTS		136475.00	

ST PHILIP'S ACCOUNTS

ST PHILIP'S OFFERTON RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT YEAR TO 31 MARCH 2017			
RECEIPTS			
Offeratories			
Envelopes	£ 12,364.19		
Standing orders	£ 3,300.00		
Loose Plate	£ 3,519.72		
Total		19183.91	
Donations	£ 1,188.01		
Wall Boxes	£ 554.80		
Social Income	£ 293.00		
Rents	0.00		
Mass Stipends & stole fees	2158.53		
Chaplaincies	0.00		
Others	0.00	4194.34	
Total Parish Income		23378.25	
Diocesan Collections	722.29		
Non Diocesan	841.52		
Parish Trips etc	0.00		
Total Non Parish		1563.81	
TOTAL RECEIPTS		24942.06	

PAYMENTS			
Priest Allowance	0.00		
Supply Priests	250.00		
Retreats etc.	0.00		
Mass Stipends	0.00		
Total Clergy		250.00	
Wages &NHI	0.00		
Housekeeping	0.00		
Total Housekeeping		0.00	
Gas & Electricity	484.03		
Council Tax & Water	220.79		
Telephone	769.00		
Insurance	735.81		
Household Furnishings	0.00		
Repairs & Maintenance	3037.89		
Total Premises		5247.52	
Altar Exps	1651.77		
Stationery Postage	289.91		
Office & IT equipment	322.00		
Sundry Expenses	215.00		
Wall Boxes	119.00		
Social Expenses	147.00		
Catechetical	381.55		
Total Gen. Expenses		3126.23	
Assessment	2883.60		
Collections	0.00		
Diocesan Collections	680.31		
Other Collections	883.50		
Trips etc	0.00		
Diocese Central Fund	2640.00		
Total Other Payments		7087.41	
TOTAL PAYMENTS		15711.16	

Here's a list of the parish groups and activities at St Peter's

Celebrating Liturgy

Altar linen
Pat Tomlinson: 0161 456 7627

Altar servers
Fr Peter, for now

Church cleaners
Margaret King: 0161 483 4584

Eucharistic ministers
Housebound
Maureen Horton: 0161 483 1590
mary.horton@ntlworld.com
Church
Tony Martin: 0161 483 7720
tony.martin@ntlworld.com

Flower arrangers
Colette Christie: 0161 427 4982
colette.christie4982@hotmail.co.uk

Lay-led liturgy
Rachel McKay: 0161 487 1659
mckay7897@hotmail.com

Adult and junior choirs
Eileen Rigg: 01625 872948
emrigg@hotmail.co.uk

Folk group
Steph Leyden: 0161 456 6285
stephleyden@icloud.com

Piety stall
Denise Noon: 0161 483 0217

Posada
Maria Oates: mzoates@icloud.com

Readers
Monica Beckett:
admin@stpetershazलगrove.org.uk

Welcomers
Anne-Marie Bailey: 0161 456 2213
ambailey@cheerful.com

Creating social activity

Parish newsletter
Monica Beckett
admin@stpetershazलगrove.org.uk

Parish noticeboards
Outside - Julie Williams:
juliewilliams10@gmail.com
Inside - Barbara Goodier

Parish trips
Fr Peter
petersharrocks@stpetershazलगrove.org.uk

Parish website
Maria Oates: mzoates@icloud.com

Special events
Helen Lyons: 07854 928072
helenlyons1957@hotmail.co.uk

Tea and coffee after Mass
Maria Oates: mzoates@icloud.com

Theatre group
Tony Martin: 0161 483 7720
tony.martin@ntlworld.com

Walking group
Tony Martin: 0161 483 7720
tony.martin@ntlworld.com

Exploring faith

Alpha
Rachel McKay: 0161 487 1659
mckay7897@hotmail.com

Baptism programme
Anne-Marie Galogly
Karen Haines - justasec55@hotmail.com

Confirmation programme
Julie Williams
juliewilliams10@gmail.com

First sacraments preparation
Teresa Thiele: 07778 848709
terrythiele@hotmail.co.uk

Marriage preparation
Fr Peter

RCIA
Tony Martin 0161 483 7720
tony.martin@ntlworld.com

Vocations
Fr Peter

Names and contact details are correct at the time the magazine went to print, but are subject to change.

Sharing faith

CaFE
Rachel McKay: 0161 487 1659
mckay7897@hotmail.com

Centering prayer
Mike O'Malley: 0161 483 8296
michaeldomalley@sky.com

Churches Together activities
Cath Smith: 0161 612 3592
swazimum@hotmail.com

Guided prayer
Mike O'Malley: 0161 483 8296
michaeldomalley@sky.com

Holy hour and prayer ministry
Laura Small: 01625 876 752
lauramsmall@hotmail.com

Lending library
Ann Bonner: 0161 456 6152
anntbar46@yahoo.com

LPA liaison
Julie Williams: 0161 285 0244
juliewilliams10@gmail.com

Mother's prayers
Teresa Thiele: 07778 848709
terrythiele@hotmail.co.uk

Praise and worship
Rachel McKay: 0161 487 1659
mckay7897@hotmail.com

Rosary groups: adult and children
Laura Small: 01625 876 752
lauramsmall@hotmail.com

Scripture group
Mike O'Malley: 0161 483 8296
michaeldomalley@sky.com

Supporting Families and Youth

Childrens' liturgy
Janice Ormerod: 0161 449 5840

Explorers
Joe O'Brien: 07976 423 203
joe_obrien@ntlworld.com

Little fishes
Anne Wroe: 07763 387001
anne.wroe@sky.com

Marriage and family life group
David Small: 01625 876 752

SPY group
David Small: 01625 876 752

Outreaching in the community

Hospital chaplaincy
Chaplaincy Office: 0161 419 5889

Hospital Chaplaincy (Emergency)
Hospital switchboard will bleep
0161 483 1010

Via St Peter's
0161 483 3476
petersharrocks@stpeterhazलगrove.org.uk

Justice and peace
Carmel O'Malley: 0161 483 8296

LAMBS
Jackie Mackay: 0161 483 6348
Kath Coll: 0161 456 0881
kathcoll@btinternet.com

Lenten lunches
Helen Lyons: 07854 928072
Jackie Mackay: 0161 483 6348
Kath Coll: 0161 456 0881

Lourdes group
Margaret Drury: 07776 000685
margaret.drury@tesco.net

Luncheon club
Helen Lyons: 07854 928072
mckay7897@hotmail.com

Missio
Fiona Preece: 0161 456 4319

Refugees store
Carmel O'Malley: 0161 483 8296

Schools chaplaincy
St Peter's
Fr P Sharrocks: 0161 483 2431
0161 483 3476

St Simon's
Fr P Sharrocks: 0161 483 9696
0161 483 3476

St James' High School - Via School
0161 482 6900
office@stjamesche.org.uk

Harrytown High School - Via School
0161 430 5277
office@harrytown.stockport.sch.uk

Aquinas 6th form college
Duncan Whelan: 0161 483 3237
duncan@acquinas.ac.uk

SVP: adult and youth
Lorraine Parker: 0161 456 5629
lorraineandbobbarker@gmail.com



ARE YOU USING DRUGS OR ALCOHOL TO HELP YOU COPE WITH DIFFICULT FEELINGS?

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Low mood

Poor self-esteem

Isolated

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Breaking Free, Stockport

0161 480 2020

stockportpws@selfhelpservices.org.uk

@WeAreSelfHelp

www.selfhelpservices.org.uk

If you are using drugs or alcohol to cope with difficult emotions, Breaking Free can help you take control of your life again.

The future for Shine is bright!

We hope you've enjoyed this second issue of Shine and have learned about some of the many activities that our two parish communities are involved in. If you would like to contribute to the Christmas edition of Shine, please get in touch with Terry Thiele by email: terrythiele@hotmail.co.uk.