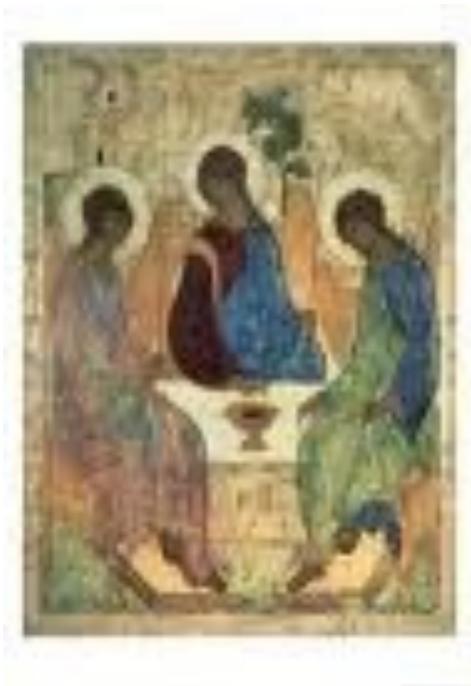


**The Immaculate Conception
Epping**



**Annual Report
to the Parish
September 2011**

To begin, a word from Father James....

Dear Friends,

The yearly parish assembly is an opportunity to take stock of the achievements of the past and to look forward to exploring further ways of communicating Gospel values in our own neighbourhood. The parish is the Church in miniature. As such, its prime task is the uninterrupted worship of Almighty God by Word and Sacrament. The celebration of the Eucharist Sunday by Sunday and day by day is our raison d'être as a community of Faith. We also pray that we may be worthy role models of Christian living to our children. In our yearly First Communion programme, we are nurturing them to follow Christ and we hand on to them the flame of Faith passed down to us from previous generations. It is the quiet and persevering rhythm of prayer, coupled with charitable works, that the reports at our Assembly attempt to record. While we give thanks for what has been accomplished, we can never afford to be complacent. Much remains to be done, particularly in encouraging our lapsed brothers and sisters to return to take their rightful places with us around the altar. Let us dedicate ourselves once more to the task of sharing with others our faith in Jesus, both joyfully and generously.

*God bless you all,
Father James*

ANNUAL BAZAAR COMMITTEE

Janet Abbott organises this annual event with a happy band of supporters. It is a great parish social event as well as an excellent fund raiser. It is always held the 1st Saturday in December. New blood is always welcome, and we hope parishioners will support it all round. Watch newsletter for details.

THE PIETY STALL

Please have a look at the Piety Stall. We have a selection of cards— Birthday, Sympathy, Mass cards, New Homes and many more. We have some lovely Christmas cards, religious, in boxes and loose ones. There are rosaries, prayer books, crosses and lots of other pieces. There will be a table in the hall hopefully after every Mass once a month for September, October and November. Please see the newsletter. If you have any queries, please contact Janet Abbott on 571128.

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP

Meetings of this Group are arranged whenever there is a need. Urgent individual help is also available by contacting Deacon Duncan directly on 01992 577173.

HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Under its chairman Paul Harwood, this Committee meets approximately every two months, Committee members include Arnold Verrall (Hall Bookings), Terry North (Accounts), Ted Goreham (Hall Caretaker), Dorothy Whitehouse (General Facilities) and Emma Ferns (Minute Secretary). It is the task of the Committee to manage the affairs of the Church Hall, preferably without calling on parish funds.

Hall bookings are running at a reasonable level and the Hall's finances are sound. However, about £8500 has just been spent on refurbishing the Hall kitchen, which was showing signs of wear and tear after 20 years of almost daily use. Although the Committee will fund most of this expense, some short-term 'bridging' support from the parish funds may be necessary, depending upon the Committee's cash flow. Some fund-raising events will be organised over the coming months to raise additional funds to cover the refurbishing costs.

New members are always welcome to join this committee.

PARISH SOCIAL COMMITTEE

This Committee meets on an *ad hoc* basis – when the need arises, Dorothy Whitehouse arranges the help required. During the year, the Committee has provided sustenance at the following events: Bereavement Service; Christmas Carol Service, Walsingham Walkers' Breakfast and Easter Vigil Reception.

New members always welcome; please contact Dorothy Whitehouse to express your interest on 01992 577173.

JUSTICE AND PEACE GROUP

The Group was established 20 years ago and currently has 8 members. We promote practical Christianity within the parish, such as support for CAFOD, twinning with Dundee, South Africa, letter writing to assist prisoners of conscience, Pax Christi, pro-Life, support for Anchor House, and the annual street collection for Christian Aid.

There are certainly many other issues that would benefit from the Group's involvement. If you know of one, why not join the parish **Justice and Peace Group** and pursue it further with our help.

JOURNEY-in-FAITH GROUP (R.C.I.A.)

For those adults who are considering full communion with the Catholic Church, or those who wish to deepen their Catholic Faith, this Group meets most weeks between September and Easter on Wednesday evenings. There is a programme which covers most aspects of Catholic life.

At the Easter Vigil in April, one person was baptised, two others were received into the Catholic Church and all were confirmed by Fr James.

An information evening is scheduled for Tuesday 20th September to form the Group for the forthcoming year. The first regular meeting of the new Group will be on Wednesday 28th September 2011.

Fr James or Deacon Duncan will be pleased to hear of any possible interest in joining the Group, either this year or in subsequent years.

READERS AT MASS

Additional Readers are always welcome to join the 30 readers who are already on our rota. Training is given. Please contact Deacon Duncan for details 01992 577173.

SATURDAY MORNING HELPERS

Five teams of young parishioners (and their parents, of course!!) spend about 20 minutes getting the church ready for weekend Masses on a Saturday morning rota. If you and your children would like to join this team of young helpers, please contact Deacon Duncan.

WHISTERS GROUP

A Group of 8-10 meets about once a month for a very pleasant Whist Evening. The standard of Whist is not demanding and new members are welcomed. Details can be found in the Newsletter, or contact Maureen McLean on 01992 573292

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ADORATION GROUP

Adoration of the Sacred Body of Christ in the Eucharist is held from 9.30 to 12.30 on Tuesday mornings, and till 10.30 on the other weekdays, in Church. This is a silent time, and anyone is welcome to drop in to spend some quality time with Our Lord. Watch back page of weekly Newsletter for any updates.

HOLY HOUR GROUP

This group meets on a Monday in Church at 8 p.m., to adore the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. It has a structured format, in the nature of a Holy Hour. It is divided into readings, hymns, silences and spontaneous prayers of praise and petition. It is a very special time, and is of immense value to the parish as well as to those participating.

If you would like to attend, but have difficulty getting there, please phone Dorothy on 577173.

ROSARY GROUP

We meet in the home of Susan Asher, Newtimber, 18, Kendal Avenue, on Friday evenings at 7.30 p.m.

The Rosary is interspersed with hymns and readings, and each decade is offered for a specific intention. The parish needs are always to the forefront of the intentions. The back page of the weekly Newsletter carries details. For further details, please phone Susan on 575017.

THE LEGION OF MARY

Our Praesidium of Our Lady of Mount Carmel celebrated its first anniversary at the end of July with a Mass said by Fr. James. During the year, we have been following up on the copious notes left by the Peregrinatio team left from last year's Legion Mission. Those who have lapsed from the practice of their Faith as well as the lonely and housebound have received a visit from the team.

OUR CHOIR

On Sundays, at the 11 o'clock Mass, we sing either with the organ, played by Janet Clements, or with the Rejoice Group, contact Susan Asher, which has 2 or 3 guitars, electronic piano and flute. The pieces chosen are varied, to suit all ages. More singers are always welcome, and if anyone has a new instrument he or she would like to contribute, please contact Father James.

SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL

The parish SVP Conference made some 350 visits to people (Catholic and non-Catholic) in their own homes and in residential homes and in hospital. Through the SVP, the parish has supported financially five SVP parishes in Kerala, India, who are twinned with Epping (£500 this year). It has also given £500 to the SVP International Disaster Fund for emergency baby feeding units in Sudan and £850 to other charitable causes. We are holding £500 for the Youth Initiative in Harlow. The conference's funds come from the members and the annual parish retiring collection; however, we have not had a parish collection during the past year.

If anyone would like to be visited by the SVP or knows someone who would, please contact Fr. James or an SVP member. The conference would love to hear from parishioners who would like to join and can spare a couple of hours a week for visiting.

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN EPPING & DISTRICT

The executive of CTED includes Father James, Deacon Duncan, Davnet Barker and Mary Morgan.

The Executive Committee continues to endeavour to bring fellow Christians to work and worship together for the benefit of the Epping community. The events and service calendar can be viewed on the website link, page CTED from the 'Epping Anglicans'. Our most rewarding success is the 'Box', offering a High Street meeting place and much more for over a hundred young people each week. We are presently considering further projects. Volunteers are urgently needed to help with our projects. If you are able to help in any way, please telephone Mary Morgan on 574719, or simply come along to one of our meetings. The next event is the Peace Service at the Baptist Church, Theydon Bois on the 16th of October at 4pm. This is especially for families and children, but everyone else is also welcome.

YOUTH GROUP

The new parish youth group kicked off in July 2011 with two Sunday evening meetings, the first of which was well attended. The second was less successful, but it was near to the end of term and was a miserable night, which probably put people off a little.

We have a small band of dedicated parents and parishioners, who are donating their skills and giving up their time to make this work.

We are planning to have an outing every month for the next 6 months and try to run the youth group weekly or bi-weekly if possible.

The aim of this group is to simply provide a space for young people of the parish aged 11-17 to come and socialise, make friends and be themselves in a safe environment. Adults will provide minimal input, but be there if needed.

FINANCE & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The committee met on 4 occasions during the year and on each occasion the accounts were scrutinised and found to be satisfactorily presented.

Committee members were Caroline Skinnider (Chairman), Malcolm Heughan, Carmel Donaghy, Simon Casson, Sarah Johnson and Richard Steggle. We gratefully acknowledge Margaret Steggle's contribution to the committee as ex-officio secretary. Fr James and Deacon Duncan were ex-officio members, our treasurer, Arlene Keenan compiling the accounts.

The following are salient features of the 12-months' accounts

2010/11 Summary of Financial Statements	To April 5th To April 5th	
	2011	2010
	£	£
Offertory	57,517	56,985
Gift Aid Tax Refund	12,910	14,954
CAFOD	2,211	3,458
Offerings & Donations	8,637	5,804
Other Income	16,980	13,918
Total Income	98,255	95,119
Liturgical & Catechetical Expenses	8,240	5,426
Premises costs (Incl Maintenance)	27,925	14,949
Charitable Donations	14,671	14,247
Diocesan Quota	15,594	16,368
Salaries & Wages	8,265	5,635
CAFOD	4,000	2,000
Phase II Project	0	7,218
Car Park Resurface	13,000	0
Youth Expenses	325	1,500
Other Expenses	21,170	19,786
Total Expenditure	113,190	87,129
Excess Income over Expenditure	-14,935	7,990
Total funds brought forward from 2010/11	85,499	77,509
Total funds carried forward 2011/12	70,564	85,499

Caroline Skinnider
Chairman