

The Immaculate Conception Epping



Annual Report
to the Parish
September 2014

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

ADORATION GROUP

Adoration of the Sacred Body of Christ in the Eucharist is held from 9.30 to 10.30 on 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.

MUSIC

The team of musicians and singers continue to cover the 11.00am masses and we have been blessed that Janet has frequently offered to play the organ at 6.00pm and 9.00am at several masses, and lead at most of the Christmas and Easter masses— this has been met with much appreciation from the team and congregation alike. Geoffrey, our paid organist continues to play the organ at most 6.00pm and 9.00am masses. Sadly, yet another series of pleas for help with Doris from the ambo and in the weekly bulletin has not been particularly fruitful – two people showed an interest. At 11.00am we continue to offer more modern music for young families and young people. The Waltham Forest and West Essex Deanery music day is on 4th October. It is a workshop for singers and instrumentalists and a small group of us should be able to attend

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN EPPING AND DISTRICT

Christians Together in Epping and District endeavours to bring fellow Christians to work and worship together for the benefit of the Epping community. We continue to support The Box, which offers a successful High Street meeting place, and a great deal more, for young people. A notable achievement this year was the collection of £1071.10 plus £90.46 gift aid refund for Christian Aid. Volunteers are always most welcome to help with these and other projects. Please contact Deacon Duncan. For more details of events and the service calendar, see <http://www.eppinganglicans.org.uk/CTED.htm>

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 will meet most weeks between September and Easter on Wednesday evenings. There is a programme which covers most aspects of Catholic life.

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.

JUSTICE AND PEACE GROUP

The Group addresses issues of practical Christianity on behalf of our Parish Community.

We continue to support CAFOD and our new Parish Contact, who was recruited just over a year ago, has been very successful in promoting and organizing the Lent and Advent collections.

There is a regular donation from Parish Funds to assist our Twinned Parish of Lebohang in Durban, South Africa, although we have experienced difficulties getting feedback from them recently. However, cheques are still being cashed and the problems are probably due to a number of changes in the Parish Priests serving Lebohang.

The parish supports A.C.A.T. (Action By Christians Against Torture) and we have an active group of letter writers who support and campaign prisoners who are unjustly detained.

We support the aims of Pax Christi to promote peace and provide a "Pennies for Peace" collection jar to help them with funds.

Christian Aid had a very successful result for their door to door street collection this year. The Parish annually sends a Christmas gift for every resident of Anchor House, our diocesan homeless charity, and we received a letter of thanks and appreciation from the Director again this year.

The Group monitors Pro-Life issues and campaigns and resists actions by pressure groups who promote immoral and anti-Catholic views.

There are 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.

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.

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 Richard Steggle (Chairman), Pat Dowling, Malcolm Heughan, Pat Kyrou, Margaret Lechley, Arlene Keenan and Ed Sierra. 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:

2013/14 Summary of Financial Statements	To April 5th 2014	To April 5th 2013	To April 5th 2012
	£	£	£
Offertory	61,012	54,491	56,586
Gift Aid Tax Refund	11,069	10,158	11,628
CAFOD	2,662	2,241	2,593
Offerings & Donations	6,322	9,265	15,620
Other Income	12,726	11,555	18,802
Total Income	93,791	87,710	105,229
Liturgical & Catechetical Expenses	7,205	5,830	5,789
Premises costs (Incl Maintenance)	17,809	17,624	17,878
Charitable Donations	12,212	10,492	10,350
Diocesan Quota	14,055	14,339	14,951
Salaries & Wages	13,593	8,770	8,330
CAFOD	3,338	3,292	2,850
Church music system	0	2,866	0
New Boiler	0	3,645	0
Quinquennial inspection	0	1,620	0
Office - photocopier and PC	0	2,812	0
Youth Expenses	160	1,500	2,607
Other Expenses	19,824	24,234	22,815
Total Expenditure	88,196	97,024	85,570
Excess Income over Expenditure	5,595	-9,314	19,659
Total funds brought forward from 2012/13	80,909	90,223	70,564
Total funds carried forward 2013/14	86,504	80,909	90,223

Richard Steggle
Chairman

Payments made from the two Parish Charity Fund Accounts

during the 12 months ending 5th April 2014

<u>12.5% Fund</u>	£
Anchor House	500
Anchor House Christmas Gifts	425
ACAT Fund	80
Apostleship of the Sea Donation	250
BRC DT	100
Brentwood Diocesan Tribunal	250
British Legion donation	25
Catholic Ass Racial justice	250
Clergy Support	247
Home Mission Sunday	200
Marriage Care Donation	400
Sick & Retired Clergy fund	1650
SVP	171
SPUC	200
Survuve MIVA	250
<u>TOTAL PAID- OUT OF FUND to 5th April 2014</u>	£4,998
	£
Balance Brought Forward from 2012-2013	£1,519
Total receipts to Fund during the year 2013 - 2014	£7,515
Payments made from the Fund in 2013 – 2014	-£4,998
<u>Balance available on the 12.5% Fund at 5th April 2014</u>	£4,036
<u>2.5% Fund (Diocese of Dundee Twin Parish Fund)</u>	£
· Carried Forward from 2012– 2013	£1,000
· Total Receipts during the year 2013 - 2014	£1,506
· Funds deposited with Embalehne	-£1,500
<u>Balance accumulated at 5th April 2014</u>	£1,006

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.

HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Over the last 12 months the Hall Management Committee has met on 4 occasions to deal with the upkeep of the Hall including the generation of income and maintenance. The Committee has had the same representatives this year with no 'new blood' coming in to assist. This like the year before is a long term concern that will need to be considered as we go forward.

The main areas reviewed at the meetings are Finance, Income Generation through Hall bookings and Maintenance.

Finance:

Compared to the previous year bookings income has fallen by 18% due mainly to the loss of the 'Performance' booking. Nursery fees remained the main and crucial source of income. They had improved by 9% in the year. Service charges were up on the previous year as well as the cost of repairs/replacements.. The cash position has however stayed strong during the year which enabled repayment of the parish loan of £2800 for purchase of the new hall boiler as well as maintenance to the exterior of the Hall. The cash position has remained healthy at this time.

Income Generation:

The main source of income remains the nursery and this income has supported the various projects throughout the year. The individual bookings have remained static, it is right to say that the Church does not advertise extensively for hiring's and only really advertises within the parish Newsletter. This year the Hall was used in support of 'The Tour De France' which brought in income from the event. There were no parish social event organised by the Hall Management Committee this year but at the next meeting on the 18th of September this will be an agenda item.

Maintenance:

There have not been any major issues with the up keep of the Hall over the last 12 months. There is a program of repairs in place and this includes the renewal of the Hall windows and painting of the exterior fixtures, the work having taken place in August. There have been minor expenses incurred, the cooker which has had to be replaced along with a leak in one of the toilets which caused concern as the leak could not initially be traced.

Conclusion:

Over all there has been no significant change since last year and the Hall is still self sufficient and not having to rely on the Church support at this time.

Paul Harwood –Chair
Hall Management Committee.

SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL

SVP is a charity which, in our parish, visits many people, (Catholic and non-Catholic, at home and in residential homes or hospital), who, for whatever reason, like to be visited. Members of SVP made some 430 visits last year. We have established links with Norway House in North Weald, which provides accommodation for homeless people. We maintain links with five SVP groups in parishes in India and support them financially. We also contribute to other aspects of SVP's international charitable work, for example the baby feeding units in Southern Sudan and disasters around the world.. We are keen to recruit new members and if you are interested in joining us, we would be delighted to hear from you. Please speak to Fr. James in the first instance.

YOUTH GROUP

The Christmas nativity and carol service 2013 was a great success in terms of attendance compared to the last couple of years with a lovely parish social gathering in the hall afterwards. This was due to a wonderful (and plentiful) team of parishioners who worked very hard to pull it off – it would be great to build on that again this year. Hopefully with the Children's liturgy group and first communion children we can have another great gathering this Christmas.

The youth group has not run this year due to lack of support and interest.

The South of England CMFED National Youth Congress Flame 2 is due to take place on 7th March 2015 at Wembley arena. The group who attended in 2012 had an amazing day – It would be fantastic to see this happen again.

Finally, I am no longer able to lead in this area and am officially stepping down at the parish council meeting (not that I ever stepped up officially!). This job needs to be done by someone at least 20 years younger than me and with a vibrant personality! In my humble opinion, it is an area desperately needing input in our community. As I have said several times before, our young people are the future of our church and we need to spend REAL time nurturing, supporting and encouraging them.

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