

**The Immaculate Conception
Epping**



**Annual Report
to the Parish
September 2015**

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

Dear Friends,

The yearly parish assembly is an opportunity to take stock take stock of the past and look forward to exploring further ways of communicating gospel values in our own neighbourhood. Since our last assembly I have celebrated my priestly golden jubilee, an affirming experience for which I thank you all. I am now turning my thoughts to retirement though this is still some little way off. The parish may well have to brace itself to accept a successor who may not be full time here, but shared with one of our neighbours.

Meanwhile Pope Francis is urging us to celebrate the Year of Mercy and we need to explore ways in which we can do this. Much remains to be done to encourage our lapsed brothers and sisters to return to their rightful places with us around the altar.

God bless you all,

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God bless you all,

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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 the back page of the weekly Newsletter for any updates.

MUSIC

We have a small team of musicians and singers but we are always looking for people to come and sing or play an instrument with us. There is a wide age range from 10-80ish years and all are welcome! Geoffrey Hooper covers most 6.00pm and 9.00am Masses and Janet Clements fills in when Geoffrey is unavailable. At the 11.00am Mass we provide folk style music as often as possible to suit families with young and teenage children. When no musicians are available we have "Doris", our digital music machine, which 2 people programme and lead. We still need more volunteers, so please consider joining our very friendly team.

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN EPPING AND DISTRICT (CTED)

CTED endeavours to bring together all fellow Christians in the district to work and worship together for the benefit of the Epping Community. We continue to support The Box, which has now been active for 10 years in helping disadvantaged young people and which has now moved into new premises adjacent to St John's Church. During the year, Mary Morgan has resigned as our representative and we thank her for her many years loyal support. Maggie Keeling and Debbie Harrison have joined the Committee in her place. Please contact them if you would like to be more involved in ecumenical activities.

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 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.

READERS AT MASS

Additional Readers are always welcome to join the 38 readers who are already on our rota. Training is given. Please contact Deacon Duncan for details 01992 577173.

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JUSTICE AND PEACE GROUP

This year has seen considerable activity, including the retirement of our long-standing chairman, Michael Harrington. We thank him for his many years of service and wish him well for the future. We are also saying 'thank you and goodbye' to Andy Smith, who has been our contact with Anchor House, in Barking, which we support with Christmas Gifts for their homeless residents. Both these stalwarts need to be replaced urgently in our Group - any volunteers? Fr James or Deacon Duncan would be delighted to hear from you, and indeed from any parishioner who would like to join our vibrant Group!!

We have welcomed Emma Little into the Group. She has shown great enthusiasm in taking on our liaison with CAFOD, as well as becoming our Group Secretary...thank you Emma.

CAFOD activities centre around the display and weekly collecting box at the back of the church and the collections taken at Advent and Lent. At this time of the year, we review which major overseas project we wish to support for the year ahead.....any ideas? Please let Emma know on 01992 576132

We support the very deprived parish of Lebohang in the diocese of Dundee in South Africa, to which we send 2.5% of our Offertory income, which amounts to about £1500 per year. Thanks to all parishioners for their generosity. Who would take on the role of our contact with this parish? Please let Deacon Duncan know.

Paul Ives is our guru on Pro-Life issues and promotes interest and action on any matter which is contrary to our Catholic views about the sanctity of human life. Speak to Paul (01992 577104) if you would like to know more or, better still, if you would like to join our Group.

Our letter-writing team continues to write letters on behalf of Prisoners of Conscience who are being tortured. The team presently numbers 17 and is seeking more members. It's not difficult or too time consuming to write these letters; if you think you may like to help, contact Deacon Duncan to find out more.

The 'Pennies for Peace' jar, which is to be found on the CAFOD table in church, raises funds which are sent to Pax Christi in support of their activities to promote peace. Thanks for all the small change which is donated.

The enthusiastic team which carries out the annual Christian Aid door-door collection for our parish is flushed with success this year, having collected £1230 in the ir designated area of Epping. We are looking for someone new to co-ordinate the Christian Aid activities next year.

FINANCE & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The committee met on 3 occasions during the year and, on each occasion, the accounts were scrutinised and found to be satisfactorily presented.

During 2014, Committee members were Richard Steggle (Chairman), Malcolm Heughan, Margaret Lechley and Arlene Keenan. Fr. James and Deacon Duncan were ex-officio members and Margaret Steggle acted as ex-officio secretary. Our treasurer, Arlene Keenan compiled the accounts.

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FINANCE & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (CON'D)

During the year, Pat Dowling, Pat Kyrou and Ed Sierra resigned from the committee and I would like to thank them for their efforts during their time as members of the committee. Since the start of the 2015 financial year, Rob Hattrell has joined the committee and I welcome him as a valuable member. Sadly, Arlene Keenan, our excellent treasurer has resigned as she is moving out of the parish. We would like to express a big thank you to Arlene for her wonderful efforts in pulling the accounts together. Margaret Steggle has now joined the committee and has taken on the role of treasurer in Arlene's place.

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

2014/15 Summary of Financial Statements	To April 5th 2015	To April 5th 2014	To April 5th 2013
	£	£	£
Offertory	58,691	61,012	54,491
Gift Aid Tax Refund	12,064	11,069	10,158
CAFOD	2,155	2,662	2,241
Offerings & Donations	4,570	6,322	9,265
Other Income	13,558	12,726	11,555
Total Income	91,038	93,791	87,710
Liturgical & Catechetical Expenses	6,266	7,205	5,830
Premises costs (Incl Maintenance)	12,051	17,809	17,624
Charitable Donations	13,701	12,212	10,492
Diocesan Quota	13,927	14,055	14,339
Salaries & Wages	13,035	13,593	8,770
CAFOD	2,541	3,338	3,292
Church - Painting / Carpets	5,810	0	0
Church music system	0	0	2,866
New Boiler	0	0	3,645
Quinquennial inspection	0	0	1,620
Office Expenses	3,466	3,486	2,812
Youth Expenses	1,636	160	1,500
Other Expenses	19,198	16,338	24,234
Total Expenditure	91,631	88,196	97,024
Excess Income over Expenditure	-593	5,595	-9,314
Total funds brought forward from 2013/14	86,504	80,909	90,223
Total funds carried forward 2014/15	85,911	86,504	80,909

Richard Steggle, Chairman

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<u>Payments made from the two Parish Charity Fund Accounts during the 12 months ending 5th April 2015</u>	
12.5% Fund	£
Marraige Care Donation	£400
Gaza Crisis Appeal	£100
Street Invest	£400
British Legion	£25
Iraqi Christians	£700
ACAT Fund	£50
Pact Prisoner Aid	£250
World Mission Sunday	£300
Holy Family Donation	£500
Bishop Alan Williman	£200
Andy Smith	£400
Sick and Retired Clergy	£250
Holy Family Donation	£1,775
SPUC	£150
Anchor House	£350
TOTAL PAID- OUT OF FUND to 5th April 2015	£5,850
	£
Balance Brought Forward from 2013-2014	£4,284
Total receipts to Fund during the year 2014 - 2015	£8,531
Payments made from the Fund in 2014 – 2015	-£5,850
Balance available on the 12.5% Fund at 5th April 2015	£6,965
2.5% Fund (Diocese of Dundee Twin Parish Fund)	£
· Carried Forward from 2013– 2014	£1,007
· Total Receipts during the year 2014 - 2015	£1,529
· Funds deposited with Embalehne	-£1,500
Balance accumulated at 5th April 2015	£1,036

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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:

Year on year comparison shows the hall booking income remaining the same. There is still availability one afternoon for a permanent fixture. Service charges were again comparative with the previous year. This year showed less out goings for repairs which has led to 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.

There were no parish social events organised by the Hall Management Committee this year due to the size of the committee not being able to support the running of an event. With more membership social events could improve income generation.

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. Renovation of the Hall windows and painting of the exterior fixtures, took place, along with the wooden floor being varnished. To make sure the floor is not damaged over the next 2 years new ferrules for all the chairs are being purchased.

There have been minor expenses incurred over the last year but nothing major. Going forward there are identified repairs this year and these will take place if we are able to complete them ourselves we will do this otherwise quotes are obtained for any work needing completion.

Conclusion:

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

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SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL (SVP)

SVP is an international Catholic charity which does a great variety of work. In this country it is parish-based and in Epping we mainly visit people in hospital, in residential homes and their own homes. This year we made 660 visits and supported financially and personally a homeless person through the winter until accommodation was found for her after some 5 months. We also supported 5 twin parishes in India and contributed to the SVP International Disaster Fund and the long standing SVP baby-feeding programme in South Sudan. A big “thank you” to **all** parishioners who have supported us in **any** way. If anyone would like to consider joining us we’d be delighted to hear from you, so please speak to Fr James for or any of us to set the ball rolling. Also if you know of someone who would like to be visited do please let us know.

Paul Ives.

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.

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.

YOUTH GROUP

The Youth Group is coordinated by Brenda Hyland and Justin Willis. This year there have been 3 very successful events:

In December 2014 a lunch with Santa at Top Golf, Chigwell was attended by ten children. A nice lunch was provided with one to one conversations and gifts from a very impressive Santa.

In May 2015 6 children attended a high ropes experience at Rope Runners, Brentwood - in tree tops, some up to 40ft with zip wire descents. This was followed by lunch in the Secret Nuclear Bunker café.

In September 2015 12 children attended an activity morning at Thriftwood Scout Campsite. They were able to have a go at Smooling (high wall rock climbing), kayaking (canoes) and pedal karts, followed by lunch.

Another event is planned for November/early December, details of which will be advertised in the parish weekly newsletter.

All of the events are subsidised by the parish and places are allocated on a first come first served basis. In due course we hope to be able to publish photos from all the above events on the parish website.

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 Deacon Duncan on 01992 577173.

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