

Journeys

The magazine of the Catholic parish of Belper and Duffield

October 2011

New Mass provokes thoughtful debate

The new wording of the mass for the English speaking church was introduced last month. Change is often hard as even if it brings good things, the comfort of the familiar has a big pull, particularly something as central to church life. Not surprisingly, views as to whether it is entirely welcome vary across the parish. Here we explore some of the changes using some familiar voices with the aim of having a thoughtful and spiritual debate.

Rupert Brennan-Brown explains *"The new English translation of the Missal is much more faithful to the Latin from which it is translated. For instance the response "And with your Spirit" is much more authentic to the original "Et cum Spiritu tuo". The changes also mean that, for the first time since the liturgical reforms of the 1970s, the translation of the Mass will be the same across all English speaking Diocese, whether celebrated in Belper or Brisbane, Duffield or Detroit"*.

So does going back to the earlier Latin mean that it is closer to the heart of what the mass is? John Kelsall is not so sure *"Different nations and different ethnic traditions have different ways of expressing their emotions /feelings etc. in celebrations. The mass is the celebration of the re-enactment of the last supper. I feel that this can be celebrated in many different ways without losing the essentials and at the same time meaning much more to the community involved than a standard text. So I am very much in favour of*

mass in language easily understood by the community. For this reason I see no advantage in going back to a form of the mass wording which was put together around the 16th century in Latin."

There are a number of subtle but very significant changes to terms used. Pam Laven welcomes the greater use of the word Spirit. *"Within my memory the Holy Ghost was used as the third person of Almighty God. I was delighted when Spirit replaced the word Ghost as I find it easier to relate to and very pleased Spirit is mentioned frequently in the framework of the new Mass giving a more equal parity to the Blessed Trinity".* However, she shares with this writer the view that *"entering under my roof" is "not language I feel at home with before receiving."*

The Bishops are encouraging us to deepen our understanding of and reverence to our Faith, hence the re-emphasis on meat-free Fridays, which I have to say is not going well with my carnivorous children! There is a subtle re-emphasis on the possibility for Communion to be received on the hand *or on the tongue, kneeling or standing.* For some parishes this may open up the possibility of a major re-think.

On the next page, Father Michael explains his vision for how we get the very best from the change. If you would like to join the debate, do get in touch.

Father Michael's vision for the new Mass - ***Break the Word!***

The big event for the Catholic Church this year has to be the inauguration of the new translation of the Missal. This major project has taken years to accomplish, and has not been without controversy. It will take a good while to fully bed in, but as it does I am confident that the positives will be clearly seen to outweigh the negatives.

That said, I expect there to eventually be a further edition, taking on board criticisms of the 2011 edition, but retaining the depths of doctrine and biblical allusion which are so much more evident in this translation compared to the previous one. However, this may not appear for some time to come.

In the meantime let's make the most of what we have!

One important opportunity the new translation gives us is to consider again how we do liturgy together in the Parish. In times past there was a custom which I would like to revive, of meeting on Monday evening to look at the Scripture readings for the following Sunday, and to involve all who were to play an active part in preparing or presenting the liturgy. This might include:

Those reading the Scriptures – Good preparation by lectors always shows. Reading with real understanding isn't just a matter of knowing how to pronounce any difficult words or names, but of really having a grasp of what the message is that the scriptural author wishes to convey, and how this relates to the overall theme of the Mass. If we have this, the reading really comes to life!

Those preparing the Bidding Prayers – There is something of an art to writing these prayers to evoke the heartfelt prayer of the people, but linking this to the themes of the readings. If you would like to have a go at composing the Bidding Prayers yourself and to swell the ranks of those who regularly do this, the Monday evening sessions looking at the liturgy of the Word will be a very helpful starting point for you.

Those choosing the music – Music really sets the tone of the celebration and oils the wheels of the liturgy. We are blessed with many dedicated and talented musicians in the Parish. They too will be helped by our Monday evening sessions, and musicians from the different Masses may be able to give each other good ideas for songs and hymns which reflect the themes of the Mass in a fresh way.

Those bringing forward the Offertory Gifts – In the last edition of *Journeys* I encouraged everyone to take the opportunity to be involved in this meaningful offering of the gifts, which represent the offering of our hearts and lives to God. Coming along on the Monday before it is your turn to do this can help you prepare for this ritual action in a deeper, more considered way.

The homilist – Well, that's most often me! But I will definitely be assisted by breaking the word with my brothers and sisters in the Parish, as we consider together what the Lord might be saying to us, to our Parish, our community, the wider Church and to the world, through the Scriptural readings. I hope they will help me to prepare better, more relevant homilies.

Anyone who wishes to come – You don't have to have a notably upfront role in order to actively participate in the Mass. Those who listen thoughtfully and prayerfully, for example, are doing just that. We will also consider how the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* might relate to the themes

and reading of the Sunday too; so anyone who comes regularly will get a very good overview of the teaching of the Church. *All are welcome!*

I am very grateful to Margaret Walker and the other members of the Scripture Sharing group who have been keeping this torch alight in recent years. They have been most generous in agreeing to my proposals to open up the Monday evening sessions even more widely to the Parish as outlined above.

The new style sessions, which I propose to call *Break the Word!*, will begin on Monday 24th October as the Parish Visitation draws to a close and the last two sessions of *Become One Body, One Spirit in Christ* have come to an end. The meetings will be held at 7.15pm in the St Benedict Room.

As a mark of my own commitment to these meetings I am changing my day off from a Monday to Friday afternoon and Saturday morning to enable my own participation.

I hope to see you there!

Yours sincerely,

Michael Kirkham

Parish Library - no need to Shhh, all are welcome to borrow. John Kelsall explains

The Parish library was started in 2005 with the intention of allowing Parishioners to share books and certain periodicals with other Parish members and the World at Large. The collection is located in the St Benedict (Parish) room on a shelf on the wall opposite to the church and is for the use of all. The items available have all been contributed as a gift by parishioners and hence are "second hand". This means that a wide variety of subjects are covered and all contributions have previously attracted the interest of someone else in the Parish.

Items are sorted under the following headings:

Advent/Lent—Catholicism—Christianity—Family—Healing—Hope—Justice--Parish
Prayer—Saints—Scripture—Spirituality

Also recent copies of "The Tablet" are available when donated.

There are about 100 items in the collection, but the intention is to only keep books published in the last 20 years in order that the collection stays reasonably modern. This means that the numbers are decreasing as older books are removed. There are also some CD's available, but the cassette and video tapes will shortly be removed as little interest has been shown in these recently.

To help avoid fossilisation if any parishioner has personal copies of books or CD's relating to any of the above headings which have been read/heard and are gathering dust, then please consider the possibility of donating them to the Parish Library so that others may benefit. Please feel free to browse the library. If you wish to borrow something then please fill in the sheet in the lending folder at the end of the shelf. **If anyone has a contribution then please contact John Kelsall so that items can be catalogued before going on display.**

Parish Finances – David Mullen reminds us that we all need to chip in to keep the parish economy afloat!

First of all, a big thank you to all those who have already responded to the appeal, made in May, asking parishioners to increase the level of regular Sunday Mass offerings. We can only begin to work out the actual affects on parish finance towards the end of September/beginning of October, but we are hopeful the appeal will have helped us achieve our aims.

It will be remembered that the appeal was made with the aim of getting the parish's income and expenditure in balance. In particular, we had in mind that there were parishioners who had been giving regularly for some years, using the envelope scheme or standing orders, and we asked them to consider increasing their offering by around 10% to help meet the level of increased costs we now have to face.

So this note is a reminder to those who intend changing the level of giving, but have still to make the change: please do so as soon as you can.

The appeal also featured the role of gift aid by which the government repays to the parish the tax which a parishioner has paid on the amount given. This makes every pound given worth £1.25 to the parish, which in total gives the parish around £6000 every year. To sign up for that, please collect a gift aid form at the back of the church and place it in the gift aid box for Steve Brind to collect.

If you do already gift aid, Steve will pick up from bank statements that you have increased your Mass offering and you need do no more.

It is well understood that all of us find that our money doesn't go as far as it used to. So, again, many thanks to those who find it possible to be generous in their ongoing support for the parish, not only in regular giving, but also in organising and attending parish events that can be enjoyed as well as help keep our heads above water.

The People of the Parish – some news of some very special people

(1) Award of the Bene Merenti to Bernard Holden

Bernard Holden was born in June 1941 and brought up in Lancashire. Since moving to Belper in the early 1970s he has been a very loyal parishioner at the Parish Church of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, unfailingly present at Mass on Sundays and often on weekdays besides, and he has taken a most active part in the life of the Church.

After holding earlier teaching posts outside the Diocese, Bernard came to Belper in 1972 when appointed to teach history at St Ralph Sherwin School, and he stayed on as a member of staff when the new St Benedict School came into being on that site. Bernard had been a VIth Form tutor from 1973 at St Ralph Sherwin, becoming Head of Humanities at St Benedict's from 1986 and later head of the Sixth form at the new school. He was involved in pastoral care and regularly

took assemblies at the school. He took the option of an early retirement package in 1993 to meet the situation of falling numbers on roll in the school at that time.

His retirement was certainly been a most fruitful one. Bernard had already been an active member of the parish SVP from its earliest years: it was founded in 1976 and Bernard joined in 1977. Later he became the group's twinning secretary and formed a link with India. For more than 10 years he held the position of President of the Belper SVP. He has always been very involved in the SVP yearly outing with a party afterwards held for senior citizens. Over the years he has visited many hundreds of people, most of them elderly or disabled. He has given them lifts, eg. helping them keep doctors and hospital appointments. He does the monthly bingo calling at Belper's Ada Belfield Care Home, and goes singing with the joint SVP/Franciscan *Troubadours* group approximately every fortnight to other residential care homes in the parish. He assists too with transport to the annual liturgy of anointing of the sick and housebound that is held in the parish.

Bernard's commitment to the SVP does not end in Belper. For many years he has attended the SVP area council that meets every three months. Among other things this is involved with the running of a children's holiday camp at Mabelthorpe. Bernard also serves on the committee of Ozanum House in Nottingham, a home for girls aged 16-17. For many years he has been treasurer to Ozanum House and often has attended meetings in Nottingham as frequently as once a week or fortnight, until more recently the commitment has eased to monthly.

Since 1983 Bernard has been an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion within the parish. Before and since this time he has regularly read in church, and been very involved in times of additional liturgical activity, such as Holy Week and Easter. Bernard takes part in Lenten and scripture groups, and has helped to lead RCIA courses. In the 1990s he was involved in leading courses for engaged couples in the parish.

Bernard has also been involved for a number of years with the Parish Pastoral Council, and is at present its Chair. He is the parish's historian, and has researched the origins of the parish, resulting in the recently updated edition of the *History of the Catholic Parish of Belper and Duffield* prepared for the Centenary year of 2010. He was fully involved in the planning of the Centenary Year as a committee member.

In outlining the extensive range of Bernard's very loyal support and involvement in parish affairs it would an omission to detail that he regularly does church cleaning together with Margaret; that he has been involved in hedge cutting and gardening of the church's properties at Belper and Duffield; and that he always attends parish social events if possible at which he frequently ends up either singing or drying dishes (or both!) In January last year he took a part in the Parish Panto.

Outside the church Bernard has been very closely involved in running the Matthew Smith Almshouses in Belper, which administers two houses and four flats for the accomodation of elderly people. He has in addition got involved in the World Heritage Site at Cromford where he has been on the management commitment of the Arkwright Society at Cromford for many years; he takes guided walks around the ancient woodlands and flower meadows of Cromford; he has also helped disadvantaged young people from that area to have a holiday through the Cromford Venture Centre.

Bernard has been happily married to his wife Margaret for over 40 years, and they have three children.

Because of the outstanding range of his activities, both within the parish and beyond, the Bishop decided to petition the Holy Father to award Bernard with the *Bene Merenti* in recognition of his tireless efforts inspired by his Catholic faith, and because of the great faithfulness and charity he shows in all he does. I am delighted that this award has now been granted.

(2) Award of the Bene Merenti to Pamela Laven

Pam was born in Manchester during the early years of the Second World War and grew up in Stalybridge. A notable local Franciscan church, known as Gorton Monastery, and the apostolic witness of a Chinese member of the parish SVP who visited her chronically sick grandmother, have both proved long-lasting influences on the apostolate of Pam herself as it has unfolded by God's grace.

Pam and her husband Jack moved to Belper with their six children in 1977, becoming faithful parishioners at the parish church of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour. Pam joined the SVP soon after coming to the parish. She has remained a very active member over the past thirty-odd years and is currently the parish branch's President, a post she has held for the past three years. The branch has long been recognised as one of the most vibrant in the region, and Pam has taken a full and committed part in all its charitable activities throughout this time.

Pam was a teacher at St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School in Belper for over twenty years. She studied to become a teacher while still bringing up her young family, fully supported in this endeavour by her husband Jack, who took a fully hands-on role with the children. After qualifying Pam secured a post at St Elizabeth's, where she taught very successfully until her retirement in 1999. During this period she became Head of Infants. She also took a keen and active part in the preparation of children for their First Holy Communion, in the days when this catechesis was usually given at school. Pam's commitment to the cause of Catholic education was also shown in her regular attendance at meetings of the Derby Branch of the Catholic Teachers Association, of which she became President for a number of years.

The sisters who founded St Elizabeth's school were Franciscan Minoresses. There were still teaching sisters on the staff when Pam joined. This link, together with her memories of Gorton Monastery, inspired her to look more closely into Franciscan spirituality. In 1985, after a period of discernment and preparation, she was professed as a member of the Secular Franciscan Order in the Clay Cross Fraternity. Recently she has celebrated her Silver Jubilee as a Franciscan. Over the years she was elected to serve the Clay Cross Fraternity for the positions of Vice Minister, Minister and Formation Minister. When the five Franciscans who travelled to Clay Cross from Belper sought, with the full encouragement of the Clay Cross Fraternity, to establish a new Fraternity in Our Lady's Parish, Belper in recent years, Pam was one of the founder members. Pam took on the role of Formation Minister to the new Fraternity, and this is a position she still holds. During the past six years the size of the Fraternity has more than doubled, with eight new members being professed under her formation. Pam herself follows the Rule of the Secular Franciscans keenly, her life of prayer being very important to her.

A creative development in the Catholic outreach of the parish has come about in recent years largely through Pam's inspiration. The *Troubadours* is a group of approximately a dozen

parishioners who visit four or five local residential homes for the elderly in the Belper and Duffield area on a regular basis. The group holds attractive and meaningful religious services for the residents of these homes in the first half of their visits, before turning to lighter entertainment of a more popular sing-along nature in the second half. These visits, which are much appreciated, draw on the commitment of both SVP and SFO members within the parish, combining the apostolates and spiritualities of the two groups in a creative way which reflects their integration in the first place within Pam's own heart. The development of the group also demonstrates perfectly Pam's ability to enlist the talents of family and friends in a style of leadership which is both effective but self-effacing. It is doubtful, for example, that she thinks of herself as the group's leader with all that that title might imply. Nevertheless her inspiration in the inception and development of the group has been an important key to its happy success.

Pam's extravert Catholic commitment to service and to her faith is well known to her large family, which now numbers 17 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren, on whom she exercises a great and good influence. She also serves in a more secular sphere as President of the Belper Bowls Club. But it is in relation to her commitment to the parish that the Bishop decided to apply to the Holy Father to award Pam with the *Bene Merenti*. Pam is a hard worker in many spheres of parish life besides those mentioned above. She is, for example, an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, attends mid-week Masses most days, and regularly takes the sacrament to the elderly and housebound. In another mode she also fully supports social and fund-raising efforts of the parish and is usually to be found among the groups organising these efforts. In addition, during the Parish's Centenary year Pam was a hard-working member of the Centenary Committee which, chaired by Jack, co-ordinated parish activities in that year of special celebration with such good effect.

On a personal level I am grateful not only for Pam's enthusiasm but also for her friendship and ever-loyal support in the parish. I am delighted she has been considered worthy of this award

Michael Kirkham.



(3) Our own Delia Smith has been capturing the headlines in the foreign press. Here is an extract from the Kaiserstuhl Regional News (translated into English)



“An English couple have holidayed in Bahlingen for 25 years.

On Tuesday afternoon in Bahlingen Town Hall a special ceremony took place for our visitors. In the presence of Monika Boos, Tourist officer, Thomas Hauber from the wine producer, the Gut family from the Guest House. Harald Lobis Mayor, congratulated Barbara & John on their loyalty to Bahlingen.

The Guest House ‘Zum Hecht’ has been in the same family for 200 years and Ralf & Claudia Gut have run it for the last 16 years and are the eighth generation. In 1986 and 1987 the couple from Belper, (which is not far from Nottingham Forest,) stayed four days, before driving on to Austria. They only found the Kaiserstuhl because they met the Handloser’s in Wales and then visited them in Bahlingen.

1989, they booked a room with Gustav Gut in ‘Zum Hecht’ for their Silver Wedding. But Gustav could not speak any English, and so what happened for their Silver Wedding night they were given two single rooms instead of a double room. Over the years they have come regularly to holiday for around 3 weeks in the ‘Hecht’ and have developed a real friendship with the Gut family.

They have ridden bicycles and walked here, sampled the wine and the good food. They are good customers of the ‘Weingut Hauber’. The boot is always full when they drive back.

Barbara said ‘The holiday here is so friendly and the weather is better than England’

In 3 years they hope to have their Golden Wedding in the ‘Hecht’ –but in a double bedroom. Mayor Harald Lotis thanked them for their loyalty and presented them with a small basket of delicious food and drink and a new book of the Kaisersthul.

The holiday guests were toasted with a glass of Bahlinger Sekt.”

More people of the Parish - an update of Listings since October 2009

Baptisms:

2009 - Gabriel Nolan-Morris, Ben Luka Northridge, Ellenor Mae Melbourne, Finn Noel Woods, Callum David Haddon, Alyssa Holly Caddick, Neve Isobel Delap, Cillian Neil Lamont (*there were sixteen baptisms altogether in 2009*)

2010 - Edward George Roberts, Joe Robert Claxton, Millie Dee Claxton, Lottie Anna Claxton, Alice Rose Corden, James William Harvey, Kiera Daisy-Mai McInley-Shanks, Thomas Ian Cako, Emilie Sarah O'Brien, Anna Louise Schumann, Katherine Mary Schumann, Elizabeth Rose Schumann, Maisie Lynn Lucy Tooher, Rossano Howard Pieroni, Sophia May Brennan Brown, Samuel Patrick Wrenn, Alice Rose Britten

2011 - Erin Grace Colebrook, Zacharie Matthew Letch, Sophia Rose Caddick, Daniel Richard Ernest Clarke, Stella Guinevere James, Saskhia May James, Lee Paul Avary James, Nine Holly Freja James

Paul Schumann (adult candidate), Gerald Paguntalan, Thady James Doust, Ruby Rose Clancy, Nancy Wardle, Zachary Drayson, Toby Drayson, Connor Breslin, Aurora Nolan-Morris

Confirmations:

2010 - Sally Anne Phillips (received into the Catholic Church)

2011 - Joshua Bonner, Ellie-May Colenso, Imogen Lambert, Olivia Halliday, Damian Lopes, Calvin Medcalf, William Monange, Calum Phelan, Abigail Roberts, Alice Smith, Joseph Smith, Edward Barker, Madeleine Shrimpling. (See below)



Holy Matrimony:

2009 - Nicky John Hinton and Amanda Elizabeth Price

2010 - Mark Charles Peter Hayes and Katie Helen Riley

2011 - Stephen John Hallett and Charlotte Lynne Booth, Paul Schumann and Jane Annette Therese McDonald

Funerals:2009 - Agnes Florence Byrne, Philippa Catherine Holmes, Lenora Grace Davis, Margaret Eileen Kirkley, Patricia Mary Sweeney, Frieda Thompson, Margaret Mary Clay (*there were ten funerals altogether in 2009*)

2010 - Carmel Rosemary Webster, Charlotte Rosemary Ince, Margaret Patricia (Peggy) Hall, Johanna Catherine Walker, Duncan Gregory Stewart, Robert McCartin, Patrick Foley, Mary Corrado, Anastasia Gunter, Lucia Asher, Edna May Hampson

2011 - Maureen Wilson, James Edmond (Eamon) Moy, Jean Mary Thring, Freda Doreen (Pip) Harvey, Robert Loud. A Requiem Mass was also celebrated for Mary Oakley prior to her funeral being held in Westport, Ireland

Parish and local groups

Christian Meditation Group

A Christian Meditation Group at the Church House, Gibfield Lane, Belper welcomes newcomers each Wednesday at 10.00am to a Meditation Group meeting. This ancient form of Christian prayer, rooted in the Gospel and St Paul, was taught by John Cassian and the 4th century Desert Fathers and Mothers. It is found too in the fourteenth century spiritual classic, *The Cloud of Unknowing*. Meditation, also known as contemplative prayer, seeks God in the silence and stillness beyond word and thought. A Benedictine monk, John Main (1926-1982) has rediscovered this ancient prayer tradition for contemporary men and women. There are now many Christian Meditation groups meeting weekly in the UK. The one hour meeting includes quiet music, a short recorded talk on meditation by Father John Main or another speaker, 25 minutes of silent meditation, followed by a period of discussion in which any questions may be asked.

For further information phone Patricia Lloyd, or come along any Wednesday morning at 10am.

Newman Reading Group

The group, which meets at 61 Bridge Street, has now completed its initial survey of key writings by Cardinal Blessed John Henry Newman. It is now turning its attention to the writings of the Fathers of the Church, which Newman greatly revered. In coming meetings we will be looking at the Penguin Classic *Early Christian Writings* edited by Maxwell Staniforth, and available from booksellers or Amazon. After a look at the Epistle of Polycarp, the early 2nd century Bishop of Smyrna, and an eye witness account of his martyrdom, we will be reading the Epistle of Pope Clement I, the letters of St Ignatius of Antioch and *The Didache*, an early Christian work describing the practice of the early Church in respect of the Eucharist and Baptism.

All are welcome! Meetings begin at 7.00pm.

News of the Co-workers of Mother Teresa of Belper and Duffield

In August 2011 160 disadvantaged young people from Birmingham were invited into Derbyshire by the Co-workers of Mickleover, Belper and Duffield to enjoy a day out. Five of our Parishioners were closely involved. Arriving in two double decker buses, they were supported by the Missionaries of Charity Sisters and volunteers. Fr. Tim O`Sullivan greeted them on their arrival for 11 o`clock Mass at Our Lady`s Mickleover. After Mass they were welcomed into the Parish Hall which had been transformed into a "restaurant" and served a hearty meal which they all enjoyed

immensely. When all were replete they were taken on a trip to Markeaton Park for entertainment with football, tennis and other activities. Last but not least a picnic was provided before they set off to their "homes". Another occasion of the co-workers endeavouring to "do something beautiful for God" in the words of Mother Teresa.

Wyn Edwards

News from St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School

It has been an exciting year at St Elizabeth's again with many changes taking place. After the freezing winter and numerous mornings clearing snow off the school drive you would think we would appreciate the hot spell at Easter but NO – more on that later but we have managed to fit in many school trips, one to the Norfolk coast and various overnight stays in Derbyshire where the weather did warm up a little through the Summer months.

The children have continued to support CAFOD, the Padley centre and a local Belper charity; they also support a convent in Quazululand, Africa run by our friends the Franciscan Sisters. Three of their order came to visit school in June and were astounded that in our country the children are brought to school in buses and cars, they said that at their African school children often had to walk 5 miles to get to school!

Sr Bernadette has offered her pastoral support to both children and staff this year with. Father Michael came into school talking to children in a pastoral role and has celebrated Mass with us on many occasions. The Parish held several events in the school hall including a barn dance and a Three Crows Concert.

The Bishop's conference of England and Wales are consulting on which masses can be celebrated in schools and which should stay as Sunday Church masses. Children at school are getting use to the new responses and have already learned 'and with your spirit' as a response to 'The Lord be with you' they adapt to change quickly whilst we as adults are finding it more difficult to remember!

Another success was celebrating the nativity and Y5/6 production with the Leisure group. It is a real privilege to share lunch with them and a pleasure to have them stay to watch the shows.

So the Y6s completed their time with us at St Elizabeth's with a show 'Pirates of the Curry Bean' . They designed and planned a Trim trail for the playground and we were able to install it during the Summer ready for children to play on. Along with the tree planted after the leaver's Mass it will be a lasting reminder of what a super year group they were.

This Term has seen all reception children starting at the same time in September which meant we had one child who was only four years and three days old when he started school. As a result, we had to change things around to make their transition into school easier. All has gone well - the one thing that did bother us though was that hot spell at Easter, apparently the insects breed rapidly during a hot spring – especially wasps. Which led to an abundance of them and two wasps nests in school. Fortunately the council were able to deal with them but I am now praying for a cooler Easter and hotter Summer next year!

Many thanks to all members of the Parish who continue to support the school. –

Best Wishes and God Bless from Mr Lowe and Staff.

Franciscan 'Minores'

The older, Years 5 and 6, children at St Elizabeth's learn about St Francis of Assisi. Sister Francis started this group when she taught at the school. Sr Marianne fsm, from the Franciscan Minoreesses **Convent at Clay Cross, eventually took over and developed a Programme of weekly sessions. Two** members of the Local Fraternity of the Secular Franciscans now lead these weekly meetings using Sr Marianne's Programme.

The children attend of their own free will, giving up their lunch break to engage in all kinds of activities, including art, drama and dance, centred round the life of St Francis. When they have completed this voluntary Programme the children can, if they wish, make the 'Minores Promise' at a school assembly and receive a Franciscan Tau Cross.

Mr Lowe is supportive of the group and was involved with them in a May Procession when they prayed the rosary, crowned a statue of Our Lady with a floral headdress crafted by them, and sang a hymn. Parents came too. At the end of term the Minores celebrated with an enjoyable 'tea party' complete with china teacups!

Fraternity of St Elizabeth of Hungary - Secular Franciscan Order

Have you ever wondered about becoming a Sister?

Young women – 18- 35 who are wondering whether the Lord may be calling them to a religious life.

The Franciscan Sisters Minoreess are holding a taster weekend 28-30 October 2011 at St Clare's Convent, Clay Cross S45 9AQ.

(01246) 862 621

Contact vocations@franciscansm.org Also see poster for details.

Parish Visitation 2011

This year I have set myself the target of visiting all known parishioners in their homes. All parishioners whose names are on the Parish Register should now have been contacted, and I will make an effort to try again where the proposed date was not convenient the first time round.

My aim is to conclude this year's visitation before Advent comes, with its dark nights. If you think your name may not be on the Register, or if you have not heard from me by the end of October, please let me know.

Father Michael

Preparation for Baptism:

The autumn programme of preparation will be held at Our Lady's on Sundays 30th October and November 13th (12.15pm-1.45pm). Families also attend Mass on Sunday November 6th and stay for coffee afterwards (11.00am-12.15pm).

It is expected that a spring programme will be held on Sundays 26th February, 4th & 11th March following the same general pattern.

Reflections

Swanwick 2011 - Begin with the Heart

*She comes with heart full of hesitant hope
and anger,
a woman to whom the breath of
contemplation
comes quite naturally, but now
she's looking for some action -*

*some way of channelling
frustration
at how the rich oppress the poor
here in England in the 21st century,*

*at those who lecture rioters
about morality
whilst knowing nothing of austerity,
as they quietly ransack the lives
of the already dispossessed.*

*Hers is distress for her own
lovely daughters,
whose deep commitment to the common
good
in public service
is sabotaged by savage cuts,
her tears for those with whom they work:
autistic children,
troubled families,
young offenders,
and frail elders.*

*Who now will tell them that
they are shining like the sun?*

*She feasts on lovely words and images
and slakes her thirst for justice
with radiant reminders
of God's tender love,
even in this seared and sullied world;
her soul is soothed
by gentle hospitality and
the warmth of cheerful women.
Angels are everywhere
in the baking and breaking of bread
and sharing of stories.*

*And coming home again,
she pleads for transformation
in the hearts of those who see
and yet are blind -
and in her own heart
that she may find a way
to use the gifts of her creation
to bring hope to those
in desolation,
forgiveness to those
who know not what they do.*

*For now
this raw and rough-hewn song
says:
dear Christ of love,
enfold us in your woundedness,
anoint our battered hearts
and bring us back to wholeness
and to you.*

Ros O'Melia