

# Holy Family Catholic Church

(Freckleton and Warton)

1 Lytham Road, Warton, Preston, PR4 1AD

## Report

Parish AGM 2008

14<sup>th</sup> October 2008 at 7.45pm

### 1. Present

Rev Peter Burns (Parish Priest), David Allman, Hayley Benyon, James Cartmell, John Catterall, Jan Courtney Whiteside, John Forster, Linda Forster (minutes), Helen McDowell, Peter McGuinness, Michelle Holden, Denise King, Colin Reed, Christine Rigby, Louis Rigby, Sally Sutton, Carmel Thomas, Rosa Trelfa, Sarah Truscott, Bernard Whittle (chair)

### 2. Opening Prayer

Father Peter opened the meeting with a reading from St Paul's letter to the Philippians and then invited everyone to join in the *Our Father*.

### 3. Opening Address

Bernard explained that Parish Council initiative had first started in October 2007 pick up the issues raised in the *Fit for Mission* proposals for the parish. A working group had met several times to establish a Parish Council.

Bernard then reported about the study day held at St Peter's Lytham, led by Father John McLoughlin of the Archdiocese of Liverpool. Father John had used the documents of Vatican as the basis of the day. He addressed the perception of the Parish Priest and then explained what the Parish Priest's office is. He believed that in future the parish could only be successful if pastor and parish council. worked to together for the good of the parish. As parish priests became responsible for more than one independent parish, the role of the parish council became more important. Father John said that the Parish Council was NOT dictatorial, a forum for airing personal grievances, a board of directors, a talking shop, a "holy huddle", a ministry group or a clique. It should be a leadership group concerned with and discerning of the needs of the whole parish. It would be prayerful, pastoral, collaborative, resourceful, vibrant and visible. Its tasks would include reflecting and planning the future direction of the parish, identifying and implementing a 3 or 5 year plan, supporting and enabling others and identifying resources within parish, deanery and diocese. The slides from this study day are available to anyone who would like a copy.

The parish response is Attachment 1.

### 4. Open Forum

Bernard then invited all present to present topics for discussion.

There was some concern that the preparation for First Holy Communion was now entirely within the parish and very little at school. Father explained that some years ago the Bishops had decided that this responsibility should be within the parish, with the help of the parents. The *Fit for Mission* proposal was to redress this issue and enable parish and school to work together. The new course for the next intake did allow for school input. Schools now had government targets to meet and it was not always easy to include time for Catholic doctrine. The school did advertise the course and encourage the children to attend. It was suggested that the Parish should contact the relevant parents directly. In the last few years, we have not had enough children applying to attend and we had to fill the year intake, so children of any religion (or none) were free to attend. This year the school was full and two extra children had been admitted after appeal. The children's liturgy is a monthly event, supported by the school.

The RE exam at St Bede's was the same at Carr Hill. How can our children be taught the faith? It is for this reason that the Bishop issued *Fit for Mission Schools*. Once our children leave Holy Family Primary School they do not seem to receive any instruction in Catholic Doctrine. At secondary school, the children are dispersed across the year classes and the cohesion built at primary school is lost. It is as if the children go to town and leave the school behind.

About 20% of Holy Family school children attend Mass on a regular basis. More attend when there are special celebrations. Wherever possible we should try and issue individual invitations to the children and their parents to attend parish events.

There is no intention of amalgamating this parish with Lytham St Peter's. If the shortage of vocations continues, then we may need to share the Parish Priest. We are a people of Faith, Hope and Prayer and

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we must pray for Vocations. If the parish is linked the priest at Lytham will be priest-in-charge at Holy Family. The parish will continue as an independent unit responsible for its own finances. The Parish Council will help to this as a viable option. It was pointed that those present already had connections with the Parish Council, but is up to us to ensure everyone knows about the Parish Council and is encouraged to participate.

The Bishop's latest *Fit for Mission Church* has Appendix D, which lists discussion items. Encouragingly, he begins with hope. We should organise discussion groups in houses, because it is less intimidating and find someone to lead us.

There was a discussion about the current Carol Service and whether an evening candlelit service could also be organised, with the Primary School choir singing, ensuring that their parents. The primary school choir should be invited to the current Carol Service. All the children are invited to the afternoon carol service, but there is no compulsion. The current service is always packed and we should make sure that the Christmas Mass times leaflet is available for attendees to take home. We should also extend an invitation to St Bede's school and ask them to take part. We may need to organise 'meeters and greeters', but not too many as these can have the opposite effect.

Parishioners do not always attend parish Masses, because the times are inconvenient, especially if people are working and it is a Holy Day. Many parishioners attend Masses at Westby, Lytham, Kirkham and Preston.

A lot of those who no longer attend carry wounds of various types – from their childhood, school or families. They have not met Christ on a personal basis. Father is looking at ways of correcting this and hopes to increase opportunities for prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, arrange a parish Mission and counselling. He hopes to focus prayer on various areas of the parish at different times of the year. He will also put out a suggestion box at the church AND the school for ideas. Can people who are afraid to return to Mass be encouraged to attend other services? How can we approach people who do not attend church? The power of prayer should not be under estimated. We can advertise and we should ensure that parents with children at our school are always invited to everything. There could be a prayer tree shared by school and parish, perhaps constructed so that it could be left in the grounds for a short period.

The Parish Council should take the lead in these events.

Parishioners should be encouraged to attend other events at the church: baptisms and marriages. In the past these were not regarded as private events.

It was suggested that Helen, Colin, Rosa and Michelle could put together a welcome pack for baptisms. New parents should be encouraged to invite the younger members of the parish along to witness the baptism of their child.

## **The 2008 Annual General Meeting of Holy Family Catholic Parish, Freckleton and Warton, in the Diocese of Lancaster began at 20.50.**

### **5. Election of President, Chairman, Secretary**

Bernard thanked everyone who had contributed to the work of the past year and also said that while the officers were willing to stand for the forthcoming year, they all hoped that there would be other parishioners ready to take over in later years.

Bishop Patrick O'Donoghue's guidelines for Parish Councils in his Diocese of Lancaster recommend that the Parish Priest is the President.

The meeting formally accepted this and Father Peter Burns was elected as President.

The following officers were also approved:

Chair person: Bernard Whittle

Secretary: Linda Forster

Chair of the Finance Committee: John Forster

Chair of the Pastoral Committee: Carmel Thomas

Chair of the Property Management Committee: John Catterall

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Chair of the Social Committee: David Allman

The following also accepted membership of the Parish Council:

Hayley Benyon (CAFOD representative) Jan Courtney-Whiteside, Michelle Holden, Denise King, Helen McDowell, Colin Reed, Sally Sutton.

James Cartmell and Louis Rigby were invited to join the Property Management Committee. Sally Sutton and Margaret Mooney assist with the Pastoral Committee.

Fourteen members in total. The constitution requires 12 minimum and 20 maximum.

The meetings will take place on the second Tuesday of every third month.

The meetings for 2009 are at 7.45pm as follows:

13<sup>th</sup> January 2009,

14<sup>th</sup> April 2009, this Easter Tuesday and may be moved,

14<sup>th</sup> July 2009

preparatory meeting for AGM 8<sup>th</sup> Sept 2009

AGM 13<sup>th</sup> October 2009

## **Approve Constitution**

The Constitution was approved with no amendments.

## **Finance Report**

- *Canon Law requires each parish to have a finance committee to help the parish priest with the administration of the goods of the parish. The norms are laid down by the Diocesan Bishop. (cf Canon 537)*
- *For the Diocese of Lancaster, Bishop Patrick requires the Parish Priest to select at least three of 'Christ's Faithful' to serve the parish on a finance committee*
- *Currently, the finance committee comprises: Parish Priest, Parish Accountant, Parish Council Chair, Property Management Chair, 500 Club Organiser, Recorder of collections for GAD purposes, CRB Co-ordinator, secretary (8 members).*
- *They are assisted by the collectors at Mass, the counters after each Sunday Mass, 500 Club agents, those who look after the money at social events, including counting and bagging it. There is also an Independent Parish Auditor.*
- *In a quiet week, about 10 hours are spent on finance matters; at busy times it's a full week's work.*
- *At the beginning of this financial year, the Bank Balance was £16727-47.*
- *Bank Balance at 31<sup>st</sup> August was £29650-65*
- *Since then we have paid off the parish debt to diocese £7282.82, just over £3100 for roof repairs, insurance premium of £1500 and other smaller sums leaving about £17000.*
- *The tax free allowance for pensioners has increased significantly and this will mean some pensioners will not pay tax. There will be notices in the newsletter and probably announcements from the pulpit asking that Father Peter is informed so that they can be removed from the list for Gift Aided Donations.*

## **Pastoral Report**

This covers a wide range of activities in the parish, demonstrating that the parish is lively and vigorous. Although there are many involved, more hands would be welcome. We also need to encourage young people to take over some of the tasks. The chaplain at St Bede's secondary school is trying to encourage the students to see their role in their various communities. As noted earlier, the RE syllabus is not as it was, but the Catholicity of the school is evident. The Bishop's documents in the *Fit for Mission* series asks us to do more, better. His guidelines emphasize hope and reasons to be cheerful, but the documents are challenging in areas.

Whilst the links between all schools are important, we must not forget our older parishioners and others in need.

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The proposal that the parish should encourage some young people to attend the next World Youth Day in Spain was accepted. The parish would be willing to provide some sponsorship, but the young people should also contribute. It was noted that the 'Celebrating Youth Ministry' at Brettagh Holt had pictures of the fundraising activities conducted by the young people who accompanied Bishop Patrick to Australia this year fundraising. Any person sponsored by Holy Family would accompany the Bishop and be encouraged to join his team as soon as possible.

*Post meeting note: Bishop Patrick wrote to every parish appealing for donations to help the young people go to Australia. Father Peter included the appeal in the newsletter in January. Although no-one from Holy Family went to Australia, some of our young parishioners were able to present Bishop Patrick with a cheque for £250 when he visited the parish for confirmation earlier in 2008.*

## **Social Report**

(Attachment 2 is a report from Jane Ireland about the Youth Team.)

This team also covers a large number of activities and co-ordinates the activities of twelve subgroups. The team has met twice this year and will meet before Advent, possibly with the Pastoral team, to arrange events over the Advent and Christmas period. The Events Team aims to meet 3 or 4 times a year. A list had been put in the porch for suggestions for future activities, but there had not been a good response.

Many of the other groups have been running for a while and the Social Team did not wish to interfere in the groups, but to co-ordinate activities.

Sally's Angels has about 11 girls in the age group 11-15, meeting on the first Monday of the month. She has a list of activities, which vary throughout the year. The next meeting will prepare bags of sweets to take to Naze Court when they go singing carols. In April, the girls will be going to the Chill Factor.

The meeting includes a discussion of faith related matters. In the past Sally has chosen the topics, but has now asked the girls for suggestions.

Helen reported on the progress of the webpage and how it should be promoted. She would like ideas for links and other items to be added. The chairs of all the groups were asked to provide short paragraphs for the web page. There had been 94 hits in August, 549 in September and 245 so far in October. As not all parishioners have access to a computer and the internet, it was important that paper copies were always available. People should not feel excluded. A welcome pack would be constructed once the webpage was complete and an annual paper manual prepared from the webpage.

Helen was formally thanked for all the hard work and perseverance she had given to the parish in establishing the webpage. Father is responsible for the weekly bulletin

Club Day was a great success, although the weather was not good. Everyone, from all areas of the parish, was to be congratulated on the turn out. The Fun Day was luckier with the weather and, once again, there was a good turn out from the parish, with a good number helping.

Christine Rigby is still involved in the Play group, although she has retired from day to day work. September to Christmas is usually low in numbers (11 currently; 14 left to go to primary school). The numbers usually increase after Christmas and she was expecting two or three to join after Christmas.

## **Property Management Report**

The Property Management Team tends to avoid lengthy meetings. Their work consists of an annual inspection of the property and grounds, then arranging repairs to the buildings and grounds, improving security and ensuring that communications are value for money.

John Catterall has been ably supported by David Allman, a retired electrician, who also maintains the grounds and Peter McGuinness, an excellent carpenter. The last inspection was in November 2007, which identified 80 jobs, only two of which are outstanding. The next inspection will be in November 2008. John has 20 volunteers to help with the decorating.

The work on the electrics will start mid-October. It is hoped that some of the decorating, particularly the ceiling, will start then as there will be scaffolding in the church. This could reduce

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the cost by £5000. There will be some disturbance to weekday services. Weekday Masses could be held in the presbytery for 2 weeks. We need to check whether insulation is required in the loft. A sound expert will be visiting the parish to give some guidance on how to set up the speakers in the church. Some concern was expressed about the use of volunteers and whether there had been a risk assessment. Too many hands could result in patchy work. Is the saving worth using volunteers? John has contacted all the volunteers and ascertained their skills, etc. The diocesan insurance officer has also been contacted to check that volunteers are covered.

This year it is proposed that all the wiring, some of the lighting and the decorating in the church will be complete at a cost of £12000. Add to this the cost of repairs to the porch, presbytery, roof slates, sacristy and confessional at approx £3000 and the total cost is £15000.

Next year we would look to buy the hanging lights at £16000. In 2010, we will try and buy the stained glass windows at £6000. We will also need to completely re-slate the church roof as the nails are rusting at a cost of £10,000. The barge boards and guttering will cost about £3000.

In 2011, there will need to be some work on the presbytery roof.

## 6. AOB

The parish has investments of £61,000, although this depends on the stock market. We cannot spend more than £5000 on a project. It is some time since parishioners were asked to review their donations. Attendance at Masses has decreased, but collections are about the same as in previous years. On designated weekends, we could leave out the Fabric Fund box. This was used about three years ago to pay for repairs to the altar roof and raised about £3000. We also need to obtain GAD envelopes for significant donations. People should be asked to remember the parish in their wills.

The Parish Council will have to look at fundraising activities, if necessary.

## 7. Closing Remarks and Prayer

Father Peter gave thanks for the tremendous amount of hard work that went on in the parish. It had been an edifying experience for him and spoke of the faith and fidelity of the parishioners. This is a sign of the healthiness of the parish, which is recognised within the diocese. He congratulated everyone for their efforts over the past twelve months. He asked everyone to remember to pray, both in church and at home. He closed the meeting by inviting everyone to join in the *Hail Mary*.

## Attachment 1:

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## **Attachment 1:**

Parish Council Study Day for Holy Family and St Peter's  
12<sup>th</sup> July 2008  
St Perter's Parish Room  
Lytham

**Facilitator:** Father John McLoughlin from Pastoral Formation, Archdiocese of Liverpool

**Present:** 16 including  
Father Peter Burns, Parish Priest, Holy Family, Freckleton,  
Father Frank Flynn, Parish Priest, St Peter's, Lytham  
Plus seven other members from each Parish Council

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### **Agenda:**

Building for the Future.

- 1000 Tea/Coffee
- 1015 Introductions
- 1020 Morning Prayer
- 1035 Hopes and Fears
- 1100 Vatican II and the Parish Council
- 1230 Lunch
- 1330 Our Story so far ....
- 1400 General Discussion
- 1430 Tea/Coffee
- 1445 Planning Ahead – 2015
- 1515 What has to happen – Recommendations
- 1545 Summary/Closing Comments
- 1600 Depart

Initially, Father John had intended to include something about the Ministry of Jesus, but this would make the day too long. He thought this more appropriate to a Retreat Day.

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### **Our Story so far (Ministries in both Parishes):**

Father John described ministry as being anything done in the name of Jesus Christ and the furtherance of his Kingdom. Many of these were common to both parishes.

Eucharist, Reader, Altar Server, Sacristan, Sick & Elderly, Charity, Finance, Administration, Property Management, Liturgy, Leader, Transport, CAFOD, choir, Harbour House, Botswana, Fairtrade, Social (Club Day), Ecumenism, Care Homes, KDC, SVP, CWL

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### **Planning Ahead - 2015:**

If this day was repeated on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2015, we would like to believe that:

- We achieved our purpose – the parish is alive and flourishing
- We still have a Bishop and Parish Priest, wherever he lives
- We have a completely new Parish Council with our young people on board
- We have increased our sacramental index
- We have quadrupled the number of people in various ministries and, therefore, have a greater number of contacts
- We have firmly established systems which benefit the parish

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- We have a common purpose with St Peter's, Lytham, but we maintain a separate identity
  - We share and co-operate with St Peter's and the Deanery, where we can
  - We have a broader vision of our parish in the Church and wider community
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## **Recommendations:**

To achieve the above we need to include the following on the Parish Council Agenda:

1. Additional Opportunities for prayer
    - a. Holy Hour/Benediction for Vocations
    - b. Varying times for Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament,
    - c. Days of Reflection/Renewal
    - d. *Lectio Divina*
    - e. Meditation
    - f. Etc ....
  2. Progress in ensuring the continuity of Catholicity from Playgroup to marriage
  3. Communications
    - a. Web page established
    - b. Parish welcome pack developed
    - c. Leaflets in porch
    - d. Postcards with Mass times
- 

Other items for consideration:

1. Lessening the administration burden on the priest
2. Setting up a Parish Office of Administration, receiving Mass Intentions, notices for bulletins, parish mail box
3. Should communications be one person or a sub committee?
4. Sacramental Preparation
  - a. List of names to contact for baptism and RCIA
  - b. Be friendly on initial contact, not just efficient,
  - c. Ask if they would like to help in the parish
5. Support new parents
6. Work with the Parish School and lessen the gap with the secondary school – when our young people are invited back to the parish, don't make it seem as if they are returning to primary school. We should recognise that they have moved on in their lives.

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## Attachment 3

### Holy Family Youth Group

#### Aim of the Youth Group:

To keep the Holy Family children together as a group at secondary school for as long as possible.

July: Letter to parents of the top juniors (Holy Family Year 6) inviting children to join us

September: Visit to Zap Zone – eight in total, with three from Year 7

October: Bowling Trip Friday 17<sup>th</sup> - hope about 12 will join us, 5 from year 7

November 22<sup>nd</sup>: Youth Mass

December: meet to see the film “The Nativity” with Fr Peter – light refreshments provided.